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Centre advises states to screen, test mpox suspects

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India wins 21 medals in Deaf Shooting C'ships

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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PHOTO: SALAR

Rahman Khan urges MPs to reject Waqf Bill

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Former union minister of Minority Affairs and ex-deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha, K Rahman Khan, voiced strong concern about the Waqf Amendment Bill that is under scrutiny by a Joint Parliamentary Committee. In a letter, Khan urged MPs to reject the proposed legislation, which aims to overhaul the Waqf Act of 1995. "I have witnessed the introduction of numerous legislative measures for eight years but I must express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024," he said, adding, "Never before have I encountered legislation that so blatantly reflects prejudice and ill will."

—Salar News

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MoD signs ₹26K cr deal with HAL for 30 Su-30MKI jets

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

In a major boost to Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for 240 AL-31FP aero engines of Su-30MKI aircraft at a cost of over Rs 26,000 crore. These aero engines will be manufactured by the Koraput Division of HAL and are expected to fulfil the need of the Indian Air Force to sustain the operational capability of the Su-30 fleet for the defence preparedness of the country. *—PTI*

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2 terrorists killed in J&K as Army foils infiltration bid

RAJOURI/JAMMU, 9 SEPT

Days ahead of the first phase of Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, two heavily armed terrorists were killed in a gunfight with the security forces along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district, officials on Monday. The gunfight broke out in the Laam area of the Nowshera sector late on Sunday night after alert Army troops noticed terrorists trying to sneak into this side from across the border, they said. Assembly elections are scheduled to take place on 18 and 25 and 1 October. *—PTI*

Delhi bans sale and production of crackers till 1 Jan

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Delhi government on Monday banned the production, sale and use of firecrackers in the national capital to control air pollution in the coming winter season. In a press statement, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said that the ban is necessary to mitigate the seasonal surge in air pollution, which is worsened by firecrackers. "There is a risk of increased air pollution in Delhi during the winter season. Burning firecrackers during this time further exacerbates pollution," Rai said. Highlighting the government's commitment to addressing air pollution, Rai said a 'Winter Action Plan' focusing on 21 key areas is being developed. *—PTI*

GST Council slashes taxes on cancer drugs, namkeen

Public universities exempted from GST on research grants

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

The GST Council on Monday reached a broad consensus to reduce tax rate on cancer drugs -- Trastuzumab Deruxtecan, Osimertinib and Durvalumab from 12 per cent to 5 per cent, certain categories of namkeen to 12 per cent, from 18 per cent.

The Council meet was chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. Universities and research centers that have been established by a law of the Central government; established by a law of the state governments; and institutions that have obtained income tax exemption can receive research funds both government and from the private. Such research-related funds would not attract taxes as they have been exempted from paying the GST.

The Council also agreed on reducing taxes on health and life insurance premiums, and a final decision on this would be taken in the November meeting.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during the 54th meeting of the GST Council, in New Delhi, Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Briefing reporters after the 54th meeting of the GST Council, Sitharaman said the Council has decided to set up two new Groups of Ministers (GoM) -- one on medical and health insurance and the other on compensation cess.

The GoM on compensation cess would suggest to the Council how to go about the GST compensation cess, which is levied on luxury, sin and demerit goods, once the loans taken to meet the shortfall in revenue of states during Covid-affected years are repaid.

The government had borrowed Rs 2.69 lakh crore in fiscals 2021 and 2022 to make good states' revenue loss and the GST Council had then decided to extend the compensation cess levy till March 2026 to repay the loan and interest.

Sitharaman said the loan and interest are expected to be repaid as early as December 2025, or January 2026. The GoM will decide on the future of the levy, how it would be apportioned between the Centre and states, and changes required in law as it cannot be called compensation cess any more. However, GST rate on car seats has been increased from 18 per cent to 28 per cent. This uniform rate of 28 per cent will be applicable prospectively for car seats of motor cars in order to bring parity with seats of motorcycles which already attract a GST rate of 28 per cent. The Council also decided there will be 5 per cent GST on transport of passengers by helicopters on seat share basis and 18 per cent on the charter of a helicopter. Also, flying training courses conducted by DGCA-approved organisations have been exempted from GST. It also recommended rollout of a pilot for B2C e-Invoicing. *—PTI*

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FLAGS LOOPHOLES IN PROBE

SC asks striking doctors to resume work by today

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday voiced concern over the absence of the "challan", a key document forwarding the body of the junior doctor who was raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata for post-mortem, from the records presented before it and sought a report from the West Bengal government.

Amid continued protests by resident doctors who have stopped work following the rape and murder incident, the top court directed them to resume their duties by 5 pm on Tuesday to avoid adverse action by the state government, which claimed their strike has led to 23 deaths.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the document was "important" because it has a column showing what clothes and articles were sent along with the body for autopsy.

Supreme Court **PHOTO: PTI**

The court also flagged the 14-hour delay by Kolkata Police in registering an FIR following the rape and murder incident.

The top court directed the CBI to submit a fresh status report by September 17 on its probe in the case. Senior advocate Geeta Luthra, appearing for the agitating doctors, voiced concern about the circulation of photos of the victim on social media, prompting the court to order their immediate removal from all social media platforms to protect the dignity and privacy of the deceased.

Amid the growing clamour over security at medical institutions in the state, the Supreme Court ordered all district magistrates and superintendents of police in West Bengal to take stock of the situation and ensure "safety, security of government medical colleges". The apex court also directed a senior officer of the West Bengal government's home department and a top Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) officer to ensure all three companies of the paramilitary force deputed for security at the RG Kar Hospital are given proper accommodation.

It also ordered that all requisitions made by the central force, including security gadgets, be handed over to it today itself. The matter has been posted for next hearing on 17 September. *—PTI*

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India backs Israel-Palestine ceasefire: EAM

RIYADH, 9 SEPT

Describing the current situation in Gaza as India's "foremost concern", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said that New Delhi supports a ceasefire "as soon as possible" in the region, where Israel and Hamas are engaged in conflict since last 11 months.

Jaishankar made the remarks while speaking at the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in the Saudi capital."The current situation in Gaza is now understandably our foremost concern. India's position in this regard has been principled and consistent. While we condemn acts of terrorism and hostage taking, we are deeply pained by the continuing death of innocent civilians," he said. *—PTI*

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Narendra Modi **PHOTO: PTI**

INDIA, UAE INK LNG SUPPLY & NUKE COOPERATION DEAL

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

India and the United Arab Emirates on Monday inked four agreements to expand energy cooperation as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held wide-ranging talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, focusing on boosting overall strategic ties.

An Agreement for long-term LNG supply between Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd and another between ADNOC and India Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) are among the four pacts. In their talks, Modi and Al Nahyan are understood to have also deliberated on pressing global challenges, including the situation in Gaza.

The India-UAE ties have witnessed a major upswing in the last few years. Following the landmark visit of Modi to the UAE in August 2015, bilateral relations between the two countries were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. *—PTI*

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INDIA CONFIRMS 1ST MONKEYPOX CASE

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

A man who recently travelled from a country experiencing mpox transmission has tested positive for the disease, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday

"The previously suspected case of mpox has been verified as a travel-related infection. Laboratory testing has confirmed the presence of mpox virus of the West African clade-2 in the patient," it said.

The Ministry said that it is an isolated case, similar to the earlier 30 cases reported in India from July 2022 onwards. It is not a part of the current public health emergency reported by WHO which is regarding clade 1 of mpox, it underlined.

The government highlighted the clinical picture of the infection and has mentioned that most cases of monkeypox are young males with a median age of 34 years, which is between the age of 18 and 44 years. As per the WHO, Globally, 96.4 per cent of cases with available data are male, with a median age of 34 years. In 84.2 per cent of cases, patients identified their sexual orientation as bisexual, gay, or men who have sex with men. *—PTI*

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AAP goes solo in Haryana after Cong's 5 seat ultimatum

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Ending the suspense over an alliance with Congress, AAP decided on Monday to go solo in the Haryana Assembly polls as it released its first list of 20 candidates.

The talks between the two parties were stuck up over the number of seats to be contested by the AAP. According to sources, the Arvind Kejriwal-led party was demanding 10 seats, while Congress had offered it only five.

The decision came amid alliance talks between AAP and Congress that dragged on and in view of the nomination window for the polls closing on 12 September. The 90-member Haryana Assembly is scheduled to go to polls on 5 October.

AAP has fielded candidates from Naraingarh, Assandh, Samalkha, Uchana Kalan, Dabwali, Meham, Rohtak, Bahadurgarh, Badli, Beri, Mahendragarh and Badshahpur. Congress has already announced its candidates from these seats. AAP's Haryana president Sushil Gupta asserted that AAP is in a position to provide a strong alternative in Haryana, adding that the party's second list of candidates will also be released soon. Earlier in the day, Gupta had said the AAP would release the names of its candidates from all 90 seats if the Congress failed to seal the deal by the evening. According to the list of candidates shared by the AAP, its Haryana unit senior vice-president Anurag Dhanda will contest the election from Kalayat, considered to be a stronghold of former chief minister and veteran Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

2ND BIG WIN

SINNER HOLDS OFF FRITZ FOR US OPEN CROWN

The 23-year-old became the 1st Italian man to claim US Open Singles title and the youngest man to ever win both hard-court Grand Slam titles in a single season with wins in Melbourne and New York

96 Points won	**38** Receiving points won
6/12 Break points	**58** Service points won

@USOPEN

>>>More on Page 8

Missing ex-serviceman found dead in Manipur

IMPHAL, 9 SEPT

An ex-serviceman was found dead in Manipur's Imphal West district on Monday, police said.

The retired soldier was allegedly kidnapped by suspected militants and was found dead after two days of extensive searches, an official said.

The body of Lalboi Mate, who hailed from Motbung in Kangpokpi district, was found lying in a pool of blood in Sekmai area, a senior officer said.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the man possibly died of physical assault by unidentified miscreants," he said.

Meanwhile, a police statement said the five people, who were killed in Jiribam district on Saturday, were identified.

Lalboi Mate **PHOTO: X/@VIJAITA**

Three of them belonged to a militant group, while one was a village volunteer. Another person was an elderly man, it said. One person was shot dead while he was asleep. Four others were killed in subsequent exchange of fire between people of two warring communities in Jiribam on 7 September. *—PTI*

ACCIDENT AVERTED

Train hits cylinder on track, sabotage alleged

LUCKNOW, 9 SEPT

A major train accident was averted by an alert loco pilot as the Bhiwani-Prayagraj Kalindi Express was brought to a screeching halt after hitting an LPG cylinder placed on the tracks in Kanpur, police said on Monday.

Kanpur police detained six people, including two local history sheeters and decided to form a Special Investigation Team. SIT will study if there are any similarities with the recent Sabarmati Express derailment in Kanpur.

Police added a bottle of petrol and matchboxes were also found at the site hinting at a sabotage bid.

Police inspect the track after an attempt was made to derail the Kalindi Express, in the Shivrajpur area of Kanpur **PHOTO: PTI**

The incident occurred around 8.20 pm on Sunday when the Bhiwani-bound train was running at a high speed. An FIR has been registered and teams have been formed by multiple agencies including Uttar Pradesh's Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) to probe the matter, officials said.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Harish Chandra said the loco pilot saw that the LPG cylinder was placed on the tracks and applied emergency brakes.

However, before it came to a halt, the train hit the cylinder, throwing it away from the tracks, The Railways lodged an FIR at Shivrajpur against unidentified persons, saying that placing an LPG cylinder on the tracks along with a bottle filled with petrol with a wick is a possible sabotage bid. Top officials formed five teams headed by senior officials to investigate the matter.

It has also been decided to look for "Jamatis (members of Islamic groups) in the vicinity and question them", an official source said. *—PTI*

TN man gets 3 yr jail for molesting minor on flight

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

A fast-track special court has sentenced a 51-year-old man from Tamil Nadu to three years of imprisonment for sexually harassing a minor girl during a Doha-Bengaluru flight. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 on Ammawasai Murugesan. The incident took place on 27 June, 2023, when Murugesan, under the influence of alcohol, inappropriately touched the minor girl while on the flight. The girl's mother objected to his actions, after which flight attendants changed their seats. Upon landing, the girl's father reported the matter to Kempegowda International Airport police, leading to Murugesan's arrest under Section 8 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. He was granted bail in 2023. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

KPCC Acting Prez writes to Kharge over infighting

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) Acting President Manjunath Bhandary on Monday urged the All India Congress Committee (AICC) President Mallikarjun Kharge to take stringent action against ministers who have publicly expressed their aspirations for the Chief Minister's post. In a letter, he highlighted that these statements are not only in violation of party discipline but also risking unnecessary media scrutiny that could undermine the party's hard-earned reputation. He expressed concern over efforts by BJP and JD(S), to destabilise the government with unfounded allegations, such as those related to the Muda scam. Adding to the complications, recent remarks by Congress ministers about their ambitions for the Chief Minister's role are creating further discord. *—Salar News*

BSY's POCSO case hearing adjourned to 19 September

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

The Karnataka High Court on Monday adjourned to 19 September the hearing on a petition filed by former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa seeking quashing of a POCSO case against him. The court also extended its interim order restraining the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), which is probing the case, from arresting the veteran BJP leader. The CID on 27 June filed a chargesheet in the case at the Fast Track Court. The CID, probing charges against Yediyurappa of sexually assaulting a minor girl, has alleged in the chargesheet that he and three other accused paid money to the alleged victim and her mother to buy their silence. He has been charged under Section 8 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and Sections 354A, 204, 214 of Indian Penal Code. *—PTI*

Temporary classes for kids of mahouts, kavadis begin

MYSURU, 9 SEPT

A temporary makeshift school has been set up near the Jayamarthanda Gate of Mysuru Palace by the Department of School Education and Literacy for the children of mahouts and kavadis who are caring for the 14 Dasara elephants at the palace. Classes will be held daily from 9.45 am to 3.30 pm for children in grades 1 to 10. On Monday, regular classes were held for 12 children. An attendance of 40 expected by the end of the week. Around 50 mahouts, kavadis, and other helpers have arrived from various forest elephant camps to care for the Dasara elephants, which have come to Mysuru Palace to participate in the historic Naada Habba Dasara festivities, scheduled from 3 - 12 October in the city. The students will remain until 15 October. *—Salar News*

NIA chargesheets 4 accused in Rameshwaram cafe blast

The accused were funded by their handler via crypto currency

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday charge sheeted four accused in the high-profile Bengaluru's Rameshwaram Cafe blast case.

The chargesheeted accused -- Mussavir Hussain Shazib, Abdul Matheen Ahmed Taaha, Maaz Muneer Ahmed and Muzammil Shareef -- were earlier arrested and are currently in judicial custody in the case, the NIA said in a statement.

Taaha and Shazib were funded by their handler through crypto currencies, it said.

The funds were used by the accused to perpetrate various acts of violence in Bengaluru, NIA investigations have revealed.

"These included a failed IED attack at the State BJP Office, Malleshwaram, Bengaluru, on the day of Pran Pratishtha ceremony at Ayodhya on 22 January, after which the two key accused had planned the Rameshwaram Cafe blast," the statement said.

PHOTO:PTI

The chargesheet was filed in a special NIA court in Bengaluru. The IED explosion, which took place on 1 March, at the Rameshwaram Cafe, Brookfield, ITPL Bengaluru, had left nine people injured and extensively damaged the hotel property.

The investigations revealed that Shazib was the man who had planted the bomb. He, along with Taaha, had previously been absconding since 2020 after the Al-Hind module was busted, the NIA statement said.

Extensive searches by the NIA had led to their arrest from their hideout in West Bengal 42 days after the Rameshwaram Cafe explosion.

The two men, hailing from Shivamogga District of Karnataka, were ISIS radicals, the probe agency. *—PTI*

MUDA CASE

HC extends stay on trial against CM

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Karnataka High Court on Monday adjourned to 12 September the hearing on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the legality of Governor Thaawarchand's sanction for his prosecution in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case. The court also extended its August 19 interim order directing the special court for people's representatives that was slated to hear complaints against him in the case, to defer its proceedings till the next date of hearing.

The Governor on 16 August accorded sanction under Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 for the commission of the alleged offences as mentioned in the petitions of Pradeep Kumar SP, TJ Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna.

On 19 August, Siddaramaiah moved to High Court challenging the legality of the Governor's order.

In the petition, the Chief Minister submitted that the sanction order was issued without due application of mind, in violation of statutory mandates, and contrary to constitutional principles, including the advice of the Council of Ministers, which is binding under Article 163 of the Constitution of India. *—PTI*

ROW ERUPTS

FIR against BJP activist for trying to burn CM's effigy

MANIPAL, 9 SEPT

The Manipal police have filed an FIR against BJP activists for allegedly trying to burn an effigy of Chief Minister Siddaramiah here. According to the FIR, a few BJP activists gathered at the Syndicate Circle here on 6 September and wanted to take out a procession to the Deputy Commissioner's office to submit a memorandum against withdrawing a State award to a teacher in Kundapur.

Later, the workers brought an effigy and a portrait and wanted to beat the portrait of the Chief Minister with footwear and burn the effigy; at this point, the police intervened and stopped the workers from carrying out their protest. However, the workers carried on with the event, following which the police filed an FIR, a senior police officer said. The BJP workers did not have police permission to organise a big gathering in the town, or take out a procession, police said, adding party workers Girish Anchan and Prithviraj Shetty Billadi have been named in the FIR as accused for carrying out the act in public. *—PTI*

'B'luru suburban rly will be ready by 2026'

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Union Minister V Somanna announced on Monday that Chikkabanavara-Baiyyappanahalli (Corridor-2, 25 km), Heilalagi-Rajanukunte (Corridor-4, 46.88 km) and suburban railway projects will be completed by December 2026.

The announcement was made in a joint press conference with Karnataka's Infrastructure Development Minister M B Patil in the Vidhana Soudha committee room, after the two ministers held a progress review meeting of the K-Ride (Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Ltd), project with senior officials.

K-Ride is executing the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project.

The ministers mentioned that the officials had requested three months of time to resolve land acquisition issues, and they had been strictly instructed to ensure no further delays after that.

Union Minister V Somanna attending a press conference on Monday in Bengaluru **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Both ministers emphasised that these two corridors (2,4), part of the four projects inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will be completed within the deadline.

On Patil's request, Somanna has agreed to intervene in the K-Ride project, which has hit a roadblock as no tenders have been received so far to produce and supply railway coaches in public-private partnership.

"I will organise a meeting in Delhi with Union Minister for Railway Ashwini Vaishnaw as soon as possible," promised Somanna.

As both the corridors are planned to be completed by the end of 2026, the supply of railway carriages should be at least six months before that, said officials, adding that otherwise it would be difficult to open the corridors for the public. *—PTI*

Traffic restrictions in Pulakeshinagar due to Ganesha procession tomorrow

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

City Traffic Police announced significant restrictions in the KG Halli and Pulakeshinagar due to the Ganesha idol procession on 11 September, 2024. The restrictions will be in effect from 12.30 pm to 1 am.

Several roads will be closed or restricted to traffic, including Nagawara Main Road, Tannery Road, and Davis Road. Traffic will be diverted through alternative routes to minimize disruption.

- **Closures:** Nagawara Main Road, Tannery Road, and Davis Road
- **Restrictions:** Netaji Junction to Tannery Road, Clark Road towards Pottery Junction, Rores Road, Armstrong Road, and Hall Road towards Pottery Road, Mask Junction to Pottery Road, Lazar Road and MM. Road Junction towards Sindhi Colony Junction, Assaye Road towards Sindhi Colony Junction
- **Diversions:**
- Vehicles travelling from Thanisandra Main Road to Pulakeshinagar can use Hennur Junction, HBR 80ft Road, Siddappa Reddy Junction, Ayodhya Junction, and Lingarajapuram Flyover to reach HM Road and Davis Road.
- Traffic from Netaji Junction towards Nagawara will be diverted through MM Road, Pottery Road, and HM Road.
- Vehicles from Clark Road towards Pottery Junction will be rerouted via Lazar Road.
- Traffic from Rores Road, Armstrong Road, and Hall Road to Pottery Road will be redirected through Viviani Road.

Parking restrictions:
Parking will be prohibited on several roads, including Nagawara Junction to Pottery Circle, Govindapura Junction, HBR Layout, Siddappa Reddy Junction, M.M. Road, Pottery Road, Lazar Road, Buddha Vihar Road, and Assaye Road. *—Salar News*

LETTER TO HEALTH MINISTER

KDA seeks doctors' prescriptions in Kannada

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Kannada Development Authority on Monday urged Karnataka Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao to issue an order making it mandatory for doctors working in all government health centres and hospitals to write prescriptions in the State's official language.

KDA chairperson Purushotham Bilimale also suggested felicitating doctors every year on Doctors' Day at taluk, district and state-level in recognition of their love for Kannada and "their activities in favour of the language."

In a letter to Rao, Bilimale asked the minister to create an atmosphere where Kannada-loving doctors working in private hospitals and their heads too are encouraged to use the language. "This will be of great help in the progress of Kannada language, and I hereby request you to pay attention in this regard," he said in the letter.

The KDA chief said, "After reading about it in the media, hundreds of doctors voluntarily have expressed to me that they will start writing prescriptions in Kannada to save the language." He said several of them have even shared with him prescriptions written by them in Kannada. *—PTI*

City court extends custody of Darshan till 12 September

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

A court here on Monday extended till 12 September the judicial custody of Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa along with his friend Pavithra Gowda and others, who are accused in the Renukaswamy murder case.

All the 17 accused, including Darshan and Pavithra, were produced before the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court through video conferencing from various prisons across the state, where they are lodged, as their judicial custody ended today.

Police last week submitted to the court a 3,991-page preliminary charge sheet in the case.

Darshan is currently lodged in Ballari prison. He was shifted there from the Parappana Agrahara Central jail here by obtaining court permission, after a photograph of him hanging out with three others, including a rowdy-sheeter, on the lawns of the jail had gone viral, sparking an uproar.

In the picture, the actor is seen in a relaxed mood, sitting on a chair and holding a cigarette and a coffee mug. Also, a purported video of Darshan speaking to a person over a video call from the prison too had surfaced on social media.

The court had also permitted shifting of other co-accused in the murder case to various prisons in the state. *—PTI*

CHARGESHEET FILED AGAINST PRAJWAL REVANNA IN 4TH CASE

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

The Bengaluru Police has filed a comprehensive chargesheet of 1,652 pages in the fourth case registered against former MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual assault, in a special court here, officials said on Monday.

Revanna is currently under judicial custody at Parappana Agrahara Jail here, and a Special Investigation Team is probing four separate cases against him. The court also extended the judicial custody of Kannada actor Darshan till 12 September along with his friend Pavithra Gowda and others, who are accused in the Renukaswamy murder case. All the 17 accused, including Darshan and Pavithra, were produced before the 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court through video conferencing. *—PTI*

K'taka govt launches ₹300 crore skill training initiative for youth

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Karnataka government on Monday launched 'Nipuna Karnataka' initiative, which aims at harnessing the potential of the state's youth by equipping them with industry-relevant skills.

Commenting on the launch, Minister for Electronics, IT/BT, Priyank Kharge said, "Nipuna Karnataka is not just an initiative but a commitment to empowering our youth with the skills needed to excel in the IT industry."

According to him, by aligning the training programmes with industry demands and fostering strong public-private partnerships, Karnataka aims to position itself as a global leader in the IT sector, while ensuring that the youth are equipped to succeed both locally and globally.

The initiative, with an estimated budget of Rs 300 crore, will be implemented in close collaboration with Karnataka State Electronics Development Corporation Limited and Karnataka Digital Economy Mission, ensuring extensive industry outreach and maximising the skilling of Karnataka's youth, Kharge said. *—PTI*

TO BOOST COMMUNICATION

Tulu added to Unicode Standard

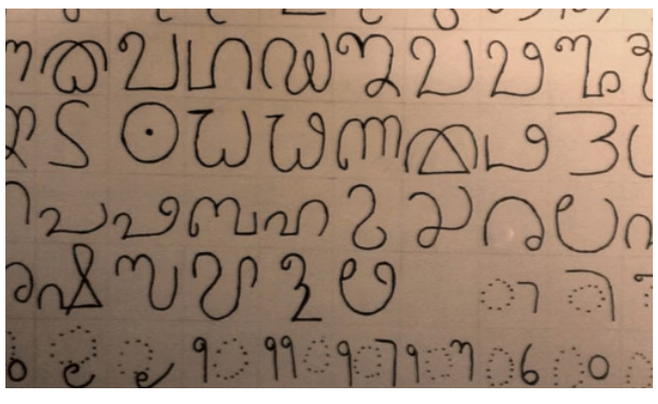
MANGALURU, 9 SEPT

The Unicode Consortium has announced the inclusion of Tulu script in its latest version, Unicode 16. This update adds 80 characters to the Unicode Standard, marking a significant milestone for the Tulu-speaking community.

According to officials, the journey to this achievement began in 2001 when a member of the Unicode Consortium helped fix the Kannada script in Unicode and simultaneously advocated for the inclusion of Tulu.

Despite initial misunderstandings with the Tulu Academy in Mangaluru, the groundwork was laid for future developments. Initially, three Tulu experts had worked on the subject, including SA Krishnaiah, a Tulu scholar.

Tulu speakers can now use their native script across various digital platforms, including social media, websites, and messaging apps, fostering a stronger online presence.



The journey to this achievement began in 2001 when a member of the Unicode Consortium helped fix the Kannada script **PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA**

The availability of Tulu in Unicode will facilitate the creation of educational materials, such as textbooks and online courses, in the Tulu script, supporting language learning and literacy, he said.

The development of Unicode-encoded fonts, keyboard software, and converters will streamline the use of Tulu in digital communication, making it easier for users to type and share information in their native script, he said.

Being part of the Unicode Standard gives Tulu global recognition, encouraging more software and application developers to support the script, thereby increasing its usability and visibility, the Tulu scholar said.

Overall, this will empower Tulu speakers to communicate more effectively and confidently in their language, both locally and globally. It is estimated that over 1.8 million people worldwide speak Tulu. Most Tulu speakers live in the coastal areas of Karnataka and Kerala, India, in regions known as Tulu Nadu. *—PTI*

Trials begin on Yellow Line from Bommanahalli

BENGALURU, 9 SEPT

Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) began a trial run on the Yellow Line's Lane 2 on Monday, covering a stretch of 18.2km from Bommanahalli to RV Road. The trial, scheduled to last 14 days, involves 16 stops along the route.

During this period, officials from the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) will conduct oscillation and Emergency Braking Distance (EBD) trials. The trial results will be compiled into a report and submitted to the Central Metro Organisation for further evaluation and approval by the Railway Board.

BMRCL's Managing Director and other board members were seen interacting with the RDSO team during the trials, highlighting the significance of this phase in the Metro's expansion plans.

Meanwhile, Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) has begun producing prototype driverless trains for the Blue and Pink Lines, which are part of the metro's Phase 2A and 2B expansions.

Phase 2A covers the 21.26 km Pink Line from Kalena Agrahara to Nagawara, while Phase 2B spans 38 km from KR Pura to Kempegowda International Airport.

These lines will be supported by 37 train sets, featuring a total of 222 coaches.

The Pink Line, which includes Bengaluru's longest underground section, is projected to be completed by the end of 2025, while the Blue Line is expected to be operational by June 2026. *—Salar News*

End protest, return to festivities: Mamata

Bengal CM cries conspiracy by Centre & Left in RG Kar doctor's rape and murder

KOLKATA, 9 SEPT

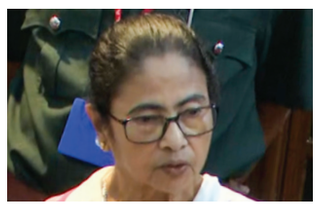
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday alleged that the Centre was conspiring over public outcry involving the alleged rape and murder of a doctor at a state-run hospital last month.

She also claimed that some Left parties were involved in it.

Speaking at an administrative review meeting at the state secretariat 'Nabanna', Banerjee also claimed she had never offered money to the deceased doctor's parents, dismissing a campaign that the family members of the post-graduate trainee were requested to accept compensation.

The chief minister took the opportunity to urge people to "return to festivities" as Durga puja is round the corner.

"If you stay on the roads every night, elderly people suffer from sleep deprivation because of noise pollution. We haven't acted on state pollution control board norms. One month has passed. I request you to return to festivities and demand that the CBI completes investigations at the earliest," she said.



Mamata Banerjee **PHOTO: PTI**

- BJP pressed for Banerjee's resignation, saying her "dirty face" was exposed in the Supreme Court during the hearing

Bengal CM also requested the junior doctors to resume duty at the earliest and directed state Health Secretary NS Nigam to keep a note of the Supreme Court's direction on the issue.

Banerjee, who heads the home department, revealed that Kolkata CP Vineet Goyal had offered to re-sign multiple times in the past week but added, "We need someone who understands law and order and sees us through the Durga puja festivities".

"What's the harm in being a little patient given that the pujas are round the corner?" she asked.

On the allegations of denying facilities to central forces at RG Kar hospital, Banerjee claimed that ade-quate boarding facilities were provided to the personnel.

The Bengal CM praised the Kolkata Police for being patient and not taking any action against the agi-tating doctors.

BJP on Monday pressed for Banerjee's resignation, saying her "dirty face" was exposed in the Supreme Court during a hearing on a case pertaining to the rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor in Kolkata. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Zelenskyy might visit India this year, says Ukraine envoy

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Ukraine's Ambassador to India, Oleksandr Polishchuk, said on Monday that President Volodymyr Zelenskyy may visit India by the end of the year following an invitation extended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi but the dates of the visit will be decided according to mutual convenience. "Prime Minister Modi kindly invited my president to visit India, and I'm hopeful it will happen. Maybe by the end of this year, we will be happy to see President Zelenskyy, as it would mark another step forward in our bilateral relationship. It would also provide a great opportunity for the two leaders to spend more time" Polishchuk told ANI. "I know for certain that President Zelenskyy is very keen to visit India. He has never been here," he said *—ANI*

SC rejects TMC's Abhishek's plea against ED summons

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday rejected a plea by TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee and his wife Rujira Banerjee against an Enforcement Directorate summons in connection with its probe in an alleged scam related to illegal coal mining in the state. A bench comprising justices Bela Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma pronounced the verdict on Monday. It was reserved on 13 August. Trinamool Congress MP and his wife had challenged the Enforcement Direc-torate's summons in connection with the agency's probe in the money laundering aspect of the case. They had said the ED cannot seek their presence for questioning at New Delhi and it has to happen at their ordinary place of residence that is Kolkata. *—PTI*

SP MLA Beg's maid found hanging in his home, dead

BHADOHI, 9 SEPT

Dead body of Samajwadi Party MLA Jahid Beg's maid was found hanging in her room in his house here, police said. Nazia was working for the past many years in Beg's house and her family used to reside in Kanshiram Housing in Mamdev area, Circle Officer Ajay Kumar Chauhan said. The body of Nazia, 18, who used to live in a room on the upper portion of the MLA's house in Malikana locality in the city ar-ea, was found hanging from a fan there, he said. Chauhan said when Nazia did not wake up for a long time this morning, the MLA's family looked inside and found the door locked from inside and Nazia's body hanging from the ceiling fan from her dupatta. *—PTI*

AAP's Amanatullah gets 14-day judicial custody

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

A Delhi court on Monday sent Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Amanatullah Khan to judicial custody for 14 days in a money-launder-ing case. "Judicial custody till 23 September," Spe-cial Judge Rakesh Syal said. The judge passed the order after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) told the court that the accused was not required for further custody at the time and re-quested it to remand him in judicial custody. Khan was produced before the court on the ex-piry of his seven-day ED custody granted earlier. ED told the court that if released, Khan might influence witnesses and hamper the investigation. The agency further told the court that Khan was non-co-operative during his earlier remand period. Khan was taken into cus-tody under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on 2 September, . *—PTI*

RaGa rips RSS in US; BJP calls him traitor

WASHINGTON, 9 SEPT

India, the US and other countries in the West are facing the problem of unemployment while China isn't as it is dominating global production, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said, underscoring the need to focus on manufacturing in India.

During an interaction with students at the University of Texas in Dallas on Sunday, Gandhi said there is no shortage of skills in India and the country could compete with China if it starts aligning itself for production. BJP launched a scathing attack on Rahul, calling him a "black spot" in Indian democracy.

Gaurav Bhatia, a national spokesperson of BJP, also accused Rahul of trying to weaken Indian democ-racy with his remarks abroad, which he claimed was in accordance with a memorandum of understand-ing (MoU) signed between Congress and Chinese Communist Party.

Gandhi is on a four-day unofficial trip to the US during which he will interact with the members of the Indian diaspora and youths with stops in Dallas, Texas and Washington DC. Rahul added, "The West has an employment problem. India has an employment problem... But many countries in the world don't have an employment problem. China certainly doesn't have an employ-ment problem. Vietnam doesn't have an employment problem."

Rahul also sparked a controversy saying, "BJP and RSS believe that women should be restricted to a particular role. They should stay at home, they should cook the food, they should not talk too much and we believe that women should aspire to whatever they want to do."

LoP in Lok Sabha and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi addresses Texas University students in USA, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

> **He has a vision contrary to what BJP promotes by spending crores and crores of rupees. I must tell you, he is no Pappu. He is highly educated, well-read, a strategist with a deep thinking on any subject.**
>
> —Sam Pitroda, Senior Congress leader

To this, a miffed Bhatia said, "Everyone knows that Rahul is an immature and part-time leader. But people have put a huge responsibility on his shoulders since he became the leader of Opposition."

Gandhi said that the attitude of Indian men towards women needs to change. The 54-year-old said he is a supporter of women's participation in politics starting with the women's reservation bill.

Union minister Shivraj Chouhan fumed: "Rahul is the leader of Opposition and is also accountable to country. Going abroad and tarnishing the country's image is a crime like treason." *—PTI*

4 pacts inked between India-UAE

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

India and the United Arab Emirates on Monday inked four agreements to expand energy cooperation as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held wide-ranging talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, focusing on boosting strategic ties.

An Agreement for long-term LNG supply between Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and Indian Oil Corporation Ltd and another between ADNOC and India Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) among four pacts.

Emirates Nuclear Energy Company (ENEC) and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) also inked an MoU for the operation and maintenance of the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The fourth pact is a production concession agreement for Abu Dhabi onshore block-one between Urja Bharat and ADNOC. A separate pact was inked between the Gujarat government and Abu Dhabi Devel-opmental Holding Company PJSC on setting up food parks in India.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said PM Modi and Crown Prince Al Nahyan discussed the multifac-eted relations between India and the UAE with an aim to broaden the comprehensive strategic part-nership.

In their talks, Modi and Al Nahyan are understood to have also deliberated on pressing global challeng-es, including the situation in Gaza.

The India-UAE ties have witnessed a major upswing in the last few years. Bilateral relations were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. *—PTI*

Haryana's politics has revolved for about three decades around the three famous 'Lals', Bansi Lal, Bhajan Lal and Tau Devi lal **PHOTO: PTI**

Several kin of Haryana's 3 famous 'Lals' enter poll fray

CHANDIGARH, 9 SEPT

With Haryana going to polls on 5 October, several kin of Haryana's three famous 'Lals' have entered the contest, with some even taking on each other, in what is going to be an interesting electoral battle.

For the elections next month, several from these prominent political families have been fielded by the Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and Jannayak Janta Party (JJP).

The Tosham Assembly seat in Bhiwani district is all set to witness a clash between two grandchildren of late Bansi Lal.

From Dabwali, Devi Lal's grandson Aditya Devi Lal, an INLD candidate, is taking on JJP's Digvijay Singh Chautala, great grandson of the former deputy prime minister.

JJP, which is headed by Dushyant and Digvijay's father and former MP Ajay Singh Chautala, is contest-ing the polls in alliance with Chandra Shekhar Azad-led Azad Samaj Party.

From Adampur segment in Hisar district, BJP has fielded former chief minister late Bhajan Lal's grand-son Bhavya Bishnoi. *—PTI*

Cow vigilante Bittu files nomination

Cow vigilante Bittu Bajrangi alias Rajkumar Panchal, an accused in the Nuh violence case, filed his nomination as an independent candidate from NIT assembly segment in Faridabad on Monday. Bajrangi has been an accused in the case of Nuh violence that had started in July last year. *—PTI*

FAROOQ VOWS TO RESTORE ARTICLE 370 IN J&K

SRINAGAR, 9 SEPT

National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah Monday said the restoration of Article 370 is the voice of people of Jammu and Kashmir, and asserted the special provision of the erstwhile state would definitely be restored even if it might take many years.

Abdullah's remarks came a day after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said restoring Article 370 was im-possible as long as the BJP is there.

"I want to ask him how many years did it take for them (BJP) to revoke it? We might take many years to restore it, but we will surely restore it. This is the voice of the whole J-K, this is the voice of the people," Abdullah told reporters in Baramulla district.

Referring to the recent terror attacks in Jammu region, the NC president said the BJP had claimed Arti-cle 370 was the root cause of terrorism in J&K, but attacks were taking place even after its abrogation.

The former chief minister said New Delhi was responsible for whatever is happening in J&K. *—PTI*

Farooq Abdullah **PHOTO: PTI**

'Cong to get 85 seats in M'rashtra polls'

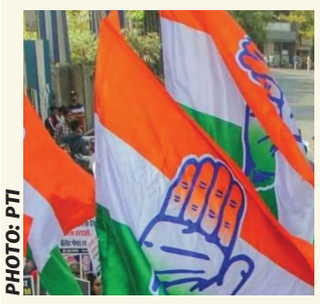


PHOTO: PTI

MUMBAI, 9 SEPT

Maharashtra Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar on Monday said his party would get 85 seats in the up-coming assembly polls as per an internal survey. He also said the party has requested senior leader Ra-hul Gandhi to hold a considerable number of rallies during the poll campaign to give the Congress a further boost. "All parties conduct such surveys. Our survey, which covered 150 seats, shows us win-ning 85 seats. The Maha Vikas Aghadi will fight together and will ensure good governance to the people of Maharashtra," the Leader of Opposition in the assembly asserted. Polls to Maharashtra is likely to be held in November. *—PTI*

Home Minister Amit Shah meets Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde Fadnavis, in Mumbai, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Shah meets Shinde, Ajit Pawar ahead of polls

MUMBAI, 9 SEPT

Ahead of assembly polls in Maharashtra, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday held a brief meeting with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy Ajit Pawar at the airport in Mumbai where he also visited a couple of Ganesh pandals.

There was no official word on what transpired at the meeting, but according to sources, Shah assured the two BJP allies that there would be a "respectful" distribution of assembly seats among the Ma-hayuti partners for the state elections which are likely to be held in November.

Shinde heads the Shiv Sena, while Ajit Pawar is president of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and both are allies of the BJP in the ruling Mahayuti coalition.

The Union minister also visited the residence of Fadnavis, a senior BJP leader, and performed puja at the Ganesh idol installed there. He later offered prayers at the idol of the deity installed at 'Varsha' bungalow, the official residence of Shinde. *—PTI*

BJP MEMBER SHOT DEAD IN PATNA

PATNA, 9 SEPT

A BJP member was allegedly shot dead in Patna's Chowk area on Monday morning, police said.

The incident happened around 6.15 am outside a restaurant, they said.

The deceased was identified as Munna Sharma who was associated with BJP for years.

In a statement, police said the armed men fled the spot after the shooting.

Sharma was taken to the nearest government hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries, it said.

"Police have registered a case and launched a manhunt to nab the accused. Officials are analysing CCTV footage of the area to identify the accused," it added.

Leader of the opposition in the assembly Tejashwi Yadav of the RJD claimed that the incident showed crime was flourishing under the NDA government in the state. *—PTI*

'AS SOON AS POSSIBLE'

India backs Israel-Palestine ceasefire

RIYADH, 9 SEPT

Describing the current situation in Gaza as India's "foremost concern", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said that New Delhi supports a ceasefire "as soon as possible" in the region, where Israel and Hamas are engaged in conflict since last 11 months.

Jaishankar made the remarks while speaking at the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Ministe-rial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in the Saudi capital.

"The current situation in Gaza is now understandably our foremost concern. India's position in this re-gard has been principled and consistent. While we condemn acts of terrorism and hostage taking, we are deeply pained by the continuing death of innocent civilians," he said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar co-chairs the inaugural India-Gulf Cooperation Council Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue in Riyadh, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Jaishankar said that any response must take into account the principles of humanitarian law. "We support a ceasefire as soon as possible," he added.

On 7 October, Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip, launched an unprecedented attack on Israel by land, air and sea, killing 1,200 people and kidnapping 250 others. Israel launched offensive in Gaza, causing widespread devastation and killing around 40,000 people, according to local health officials.

The two sides have so far failed to reach a cease-fire to end the 11-month-old conflict.

Jaishankar said India has consistently stood for a resolution of the Palestinian issue through a two-state solution. India has also contributed to the building of Palestinian institutions and capacities, he added.

"Where the humanitarian situation is concerned, we have provided relief and increased our support to UNRWA," he added. *—PTI*

Ex-BJP MLA Vijayvargiya acquitted in MP assault case

INDORE, 9 SEPT

A special court on Monday acquitted former BJP MLA Aakash Vijayvargiya, son of powerful Madhya Pradesh minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, in a case where a building inspector of the Indore Municipal Corporation was allegedly assaulted with a cricket bat in 2019.

Besides Aakash Vijayvargiya, an MLA of the BJP which was then in opposition, nine other accused in the case were also acquitted of various charges, including assault and criminal intimidation, by the special court set up for trial of criminal matters involving MPs/MLAs, said a defence lawyer.

The special court was presided over by Judge Dev Kumar.

"The prosecution could not prove the charges in the case in the court. Due to this, the court acquitted Vijayvargiya and nine others," defence lawyer Udaypratap Singh Kushwah told reporters.

He said the authenticity of the alleged video of the incident could not be proved in the court and the complainant officer of the municipal corporation, Dhirendra Singh Bayas, and other witnesses did not clearly support the prosecution theory.

A case was registered against then-BJP MLA Akash Vijayvargiya and 10 others for allegedly beating up municipal building inspector Bayas with a cricket bat on 26 June, 2019. *—PTI*

- They were acquitted of various charges, including assault and criminal intimidation, by the special court set up for trial of criminal matters involving MPs/MLAs, said a defence lawyer

PHOTO: PTI

Sri Lanka arrests 14 TN fishermen, CM tells Centre

CHENNAI, 9 SEPT

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday apprised External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar that 14 fishermen have been arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy and sought measures for the immediate release of all fishermen, their boats and urged steps to get waived hefty penalties imposed on them by the island nation. There is an alarming rise in the incidents of apprehension of Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities, the Chief Minister said and drew the Centre's attention to the arrest of 14 fishermen from Pudukkottai district on 7 September and seizure of their three mechanised fishing boats. Stalin said this year alone, (till 7 September, 2024), 350 fishermen and 49 fishing boats have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy, the highest in the last six years. *—PTI*

3 siblings die of snakebite in Odisha's Boudh

BHUBANESWAR, 9 SEPT

Three siblings died of snakebite in Odisha's Boudh district, police said on Monday. The incident happened on Sunday night in Chariyapali village in Tikarpada panchayat area, they said. The deceased are Smrutirekha Mallik, 12, Subharekha Mallik, 9, and Survi Mallik,3, they added. Their father was also bitten by the snake, and at present, undergoing treatment at a hospital, police said. *—PTI*

Man killed as 2 groups clash for water in Amethi

AMETHI, 9 SEPT

A 25-year-old man was killed in a clash between two groups here, police said on Monday. Few months ago there was a fight between these two parties over filling water from a tap, Station House Officer (SHO) Ravi Kumar Singh said. The incident took place in Poore Gangaram village of Jais area around 9 pm on Sunday, after both parties had a brawl again and they hurled abuses at each other after consumption of alcohol, Singh said. After the fight when Santosh went to buy some goods from a shop, Rajkaran, his wife Anamika, son Prince along with others attacked him, according to the complaint lodged by the victim's father, Ramdev. The victim was taken to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries, Singh said. Police was informed about the incident at 3.30 am on Monday, he said, adding that the victim's body has been sent for post mortem. *—PTI*

HP locals in fear as leopard kills 3 dozen animals

HAMIRPUR, 9 SEPT

A leopard on the prowl in Barsar revenue sub division here has left residents living in fear after it mauled over three dozen animals including dogs, in recent days, officials said. Reports reaching here said that the leopard was spotted in Sujanpur, Bhoranj and Nadaun areas, prompting locals to approach the Forest Department to capture the wild animal. In a latest incident, the leopard was seen in Saheli village of Badsar subdivision in the evening forcing villagers to hide in their houses during the evening hours. A CCTV footage of the animal entering a house has also gone viral on social media. The villagers said that they are scared to send their children to school or tend to their fields, fearing the leopard's presence. Meanwhile, officials have asked the residents to be careful while going to the fields and the department has sent a team to the area to monitor the leopard. *—PTI*

Centre advises states to screen, test mpox suspects

Airports are asked to strengthen health screening of flyers

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

The Centre on Monday advised states and Union territories to screen and test all suspect mpox cases in the community, and identify isolation facilities in hospitals for both suspect and confirmed patients.

In a letter to states and Union territories on Monday, Union Health Secretary Apurva Chandra asked them to prevent any undue panic amongst the masses.

"No new case of mpox has been reported in India in the current outbreak, and none of the samples in suspected cases has tested positive," he said while emphasising the need to stay alert.

He asked the states and Union Territories to review public health preparedness, particularly at the health facility level, identify isolation facilities in hospitals, and ensure the availability of required logistics and trained human resources at such facilities.

World Health Organisation on 14 August declared the current outbreak of mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern *PHOTO: PTI*

Chandra asked all states to make people aware of the mpox disease, its mode of spread, the need for timely reporting and taking preventive measures, besides reviewing the public health preparedness and isolation facilities for both suspect and confirmed cases.

On Sunday, the ministry said a man who recently travelled from a country experiencing mpox transmission has been identified as a suspected case of the disease and his samples have been collected for testing. It said the man has been isolated at a designated hospital and there is no cause for concern.

Chandra said World Health Organisation on 14 August declared the current outbreak of mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Among modes of transmission reported globally, sexual contact is the most commonly reported, followed by person-to-person non-sexual contact and among cases where at least one symptom is reported, the most common symptom is rash, followed by fever, Chandra said in the letter.

Around half of the cases with available information on their HIV status are reported to be in persons living with HIV, he said.

Health units at points of entry (airports) have been instructed to strengthen health screening of incoming travellers to detect any suspected case, the Union health secretary said, adding the laboratory network under Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has also been strengthened. *—PTI*

AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

MoD signs ₹26K cr deal with HAL for 30 Su-30MKI jets

India's defence exports have touched a record Rs 21,083 crore *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

In a major boost to Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for 240 AL-31FP aero engines of Su-30MKI aircraft at a cost of over Rs 26,000 crore.

These aero engines will be manufactured by the Koraput Division of HAL and are expected to fulfil the need of the Indian Air Force to sustain the operational capability of the Su-30 fleet for the defence preparedness of the country.

HAL would supply 30 aero engines per year as per the contractual delivery schedule. The supply of all 240 engines would be completed over the period of the next eight years.

During the manufacturing, HAL plans to take support from the country's defence manufacturing ecosystem, involving MSMEs and public & private industries.

The government is investing heavily in defence and aerospace manufacturing, with several defence hubs being set up. Indian defence PSUs have accumulated tremendously high returns on equities in the past few years, benefiting from the fresh orders.

The central government has set the target of achieving indigenous defence manufacturing worth Rs 175,000 crore including defence exports of Rs 35,000 crore by the year 2024-25.

Many global companies have either shared or showed intent, to share critical defence and aerospace knowledge with India. *—PTI*

32 ARRESTED

Surat on edge after damage to Ganesha idol triggers clashes

SURAT, 9 SEPT

An idol of Lord Ganesha was damaged after some people allegedly threw stones at a pandal during the Ganpati festival in Gujarat's Surat city, police said on Monday.

After some minors were detained in the incident, which took place in Saiyedpura locality late Sunday night, a mob of around 300 people gathered at Lalgate police station to protest the action against their community members.

Two groups there pelted stones at each other in which some cops were injured and a police vehicle was damaged, Surat Police Commissioner Anupam Singh Gahlaut told reporters. Police resorted to baton charge and fired teargas shells to disperse the mob, he said.

So far, 32 people have been detained and two separate FIRs registered in connection with these incidents, officials said. Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi and senior police officers visited the incident site and promised strict action against the culprits. "Every single person who has disturbed peace of the city will be nabbed and none will be spared," Sanghavi told reporters.

Police officers try to control the situation after some miscreants threw stones during Lord Ganesha procession, in Surat, on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

As per police, some miscreants travelling in an autorickshaw threw stones at the Ganesh pandal, damaging the idol. *—PTI*

'ACCUSED CAN GET ANTICIPATORY BAIL IN SEPARATE CASE'

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday held that an accused, who is in custody in a case, is entitled to seek anticipatory bail in another matter if not arrested.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra was dealing with a legal question as to whether a jailed accused is entitled to apply for the pre-arrest bail in another criminal case.

The judgement came on a plea filed by one Dhanraj Aswani in 2023 raising the question.

"There is no explicit or implicit restriction which prohibits a sessions or the high court to grant anticipatory bail to an accused if he is in custody in relation to another offence. That will be against the intent of the legislature...," the verdict said.

"Custody in one case does not have the effect of taking away the apprehension of arrest in another case," it held. *—PTI*

Wangchuk urges Modi to act on Ladakh's demands

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday to include Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, granting law-making powers to local people to protect their land and cultural identity.

On 1 September, Wangchuk and around 75 volunteers embarked on a foot march from Leh to New Delhi to request the Centre to resume dialogue with Ladakh's leadership regarding their demands. Wangchuk said he has not received a response to the memorandum of demands submitted to Modi during the latter's visit to Dras. Wangchuk also said the creation of five additional districts in Ladakh could be "indirectly linked" to their protest. Wangchuk said the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils of Leh and Kargil have only been granted authority to spend development funds. "The people of Ladakh want law-making powers too," he added. Wangchuk claimed that the government has withdrawn its promise to provide tribal area status to Ladakh under pressure from "industrialists, who want to exploit the resources" of the ecologically-fragile region. *—PTI*

Flood water expected to recede in Vijayawada soon

AMARAVATI, 9 SEPT

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Monday said flood waters in Vijayawada could recede from all places and noted that inflow into the Budameru rivulet have reduced to some extent.

Torrential rains in the wake of a depression in the Bay of Bengal and inflow from the swollen Budameru rivulet caused havoc in Vijayawada, resulting in flooding in many parts.

The Chief Minister held a teleconference with officials to review flood relief work and also to take stock of the rain situation in some districts.

A resident of Ajit Singh Nagar, one of the worst-affected areas, who returned to Vijayawada from Hyderabad on Monday, told PTI that flood water had receded from the locality.

Directing officials to make use of drones for flood relief where people and vehicles cannot go, Naidu said they should also be used to monitor the banks of water bodies and inflows. The Meteorological Department said the deep depression over northwest and adjoining west-central Bay of Bengal moved nearly north-northwest and lay centred over the northwestern part of the sea, about 260 km east to northeast of Kalingapatnam. The weather system is expected to maintain its intensity and move across Odisha to gradually weaken into a depression late on Monday night. Under the influence of the deep depression, parts of the state are likely to receive heavy to very heavy rain, especially north coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and south coastal Andhra Pradesh (SCAP) on Tuesday. *—PTI*

SC stays Allahabad HC verdict in 69,000 teachers recruitment case

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Allahabad High Court order asking the Uttar Pradesh government to prepare a fresh selection list for the appointment of 69,000 assistant teachers in the state.

The top court also stayed the High Court verdict setting aside the selection lists of assistant teachers issued by the state authorities in June 2020 and January 2022, which included 6,800 candidates. While putting on hold the High Court's verdict, a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also issued notices to the state government and others including the secretary of the UP Basic Education Board on a plea filed by Ravi Kumar Saxena and 51 others.

PHOTO: PTI

The top court said it will accord a final hearing in the matter and asked the counsel for the parties involved to file short written notes not exceeding seven pages.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati appeared for the Uttar Pradesh government. High Court, in August, directed the state government to prepare a fresh selection list for the appointment of 69,000 assistant teachers in the state.

A division bench of the high court had issued the order while disposing of 90 special appeals filed by Mahendra Pal and others challenging a single-judge order of 13 March last year. It had directed that while preparing the new selection list, any adverse impact on the currently working assistant teachers should be mitigated by allowing them to complete the ongoing academic session. This is intended to prevent disruption in the students' education, it had said. The division bench of the high court had also revised the earlier order and said reserved category candidates who qualify for the general category merit list should be migrated to that category. *—PTI*

UP DGP SAYS NO CASTE-BASED ENCOUNTERS

LUCKNOW, 9 SEPT

Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Prashant Kumar on Monday denied allegations of opposition parties on the police carrying out encounters based on the accused's caste and said no partiality is practised by the state police.

The DGP was talking to reporters on the sidelines of the inauguration of the All India Police Wrestling Cluster event here. Samajwadi Party Chief Akhilesh Yadav recently attacked the Yogi Adityanath government after the Sultanpur encounter in which Mangesh Yadav, who was allegedly involved in a Rs 1.5-crore loot at a jeweller's shop, was killed. Yadav termed the encounter as "fake" and alleged that it was done based on the basis of the accused's caste. *—PTI*

HC raps teacher for hosting son's wedding in HP school

HAMIRPUR, 9 SEPT

The Himachal Pradesh High Court has pulled up a teacher for hosting her son's wedding function on the premises of a government school in Hamirpur and directed her to install two water purifiers on the campus, officials said on Monday.

The event was held at Government Primary School Jahu Kalan in Sulgawan village on 5 November, 2021 in which the headmaster and staff were also present, they said. Shashikant, a local, had complained regarding the matter to the school administration and Block Elementary Education department through email. He had also lodged a complaint on the Chief Minister's Helpline.

When the Block Elementary Education Officer (BEEO) reached for investigation on 8 November, the complaint was found to be correct, but no action was taken, the officials said. After getting a vague reply on the CM helpline, Shashikant gathered facts by filing an RTI application. He then submitted a petition in the High Court in April 2022 along with documents, citing a High Court order in 2012.

Himachal Pradesh HC *PHOTO: PTI*

The Himachal Pradesh High Court had in 2012 declared that no political or private programmes would be allowed on the premises of government schools. *—PTI*

'CROWDS DENT MISSION'

Wrong sighting claims jeopardise Op Bhediya

BAHRAICH, 9 SEPT

Incorrect reports of wolf sighting and crowds gathering at search sites are denting the Uttar Pradesh forest department's efforts in Bahraich's Mahasi tehsil to capture or neutralise a pack that has killed eight people and injured more than 20 since mid-July.

To track the movement of the pack that has struck fear in more than 50 villages in the tehsil, the department has deployed 165 forest personnel and 18 shooters. Aiding their search are thermal camera-equipped drones and snap cameras in forests.

Four wolves have been captured under "Operation Bhediya", said officials but rued incorrect sighting reports have led to difficulties in launching immediate searches. The size of the pack remains elusive but they say that two remain to be caught.

Police personnel interacts with locals during the 'Operation Bhediya' at an area in Bahraich district *PHOTO: PTI*

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ajit Pratap Singh said sometimes "we receive reports of wolves being sighted in 10-15 different places, and at other times, two, four or six... in reality, there could have be none (in an area)".

Singh said from a distance one can confuse a jackal for a wolf. Their behaviour is different as a wolf will flee upon hearing a drone, while a jackal remains unaffected.

Recently a wolf was traced but it managed to flee before the search team could close the perimeter, possibly because it heard a drone, the DFO said.

Besides incorrect reports, Singh said, "whenever we conduct a search operation based on pugmarks, public curiosity disrupts our efforts. Crowds cause interference, increasing the chances of the animals escaping."

.With searches underway, teams are putting up posters and banners in villages and organising meetings to educate locals on how to stay safe from wolves, including keeping doors closed and not sleeping outside. Singh said to prevent the entry of a wolf into a village, firecrackers are being burst to scare it. *—PTI*

PROTESTS IN MANIPUR

Students take part in a protest march against the recent violence in Manipur, in Imphal, on Monday
PHOTO: PTI

Cease-work by docs takes a toll on WB's healthcare

People wait at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital as junior doctors view live proceedings of the Supreme Court hearing on the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor, in Kolkata on Monday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Healthcare services across West Bengal have been significantly disrupted for over a month due to a cease-work protest by junior doctors demanding justice for a colleague allegedly raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

On Monday, the West Bengal government told the Supreme Court that 23 people have died because of the doctors' protests.

The top court directed the protesting resident doctors to resume work by 5 pm on Tuesday and said no adverse action shall be taken against them on resumption of work.

The protest started on the evening of 9 August, shortly after the body of a female medic was found in a seminar hall at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

On 20 August, the Supreme Court, while hearing a suo-motu case regarding the alleged rape and murder of the post-graduate trainee doctor at the same hospital, urged the protesting doctors to end their strike and resume work.

The court noted that the doctors' absence adversely affects those in need of medical care. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also asked the junior doctors to join duty and normalise healthcare services.

"It's over a month and the investigation could not reach any conclusion. When will justice be given to the victim? Do you think that we are doing injustice to the people? We do not want to continue to cease work, but unless justice is meted out, we will not resume duty," one of the junior doctors at the RG Kar Hospital told PTI. The agitating junior doctors have launched a telemedicine service, the 'Abhaya Clinic', through which they have started attending patients. "We do not want the poor patients to suffer because of our cease work. But our demands are clear and loud, you give us justice and we resume duty. Remember the more you delay, the fierceness of our movement will increase," he added. According to the West Bengal Junior Doctors Front, several thousands of patients have already been treated through their virtual telemedicine service since it was launched on 31 August.

"We are also attending patients through these virtually held clinics and that is why we organised open-to-all clinics across the state to see patients. We have decided to hold such camps frequently beside this virtual free-of-cost service at Abhaya Clinic," he told PTI. On Sunday agitating junior doctors also held an open clinic at the city's Kumartuli, College Street, Chitpur, Dharmatala and BB Ganguly Street and thousands of patients turned up. Similar, physical 'Abhaya Clinics' were also organised in the districts of the state.

In the absence of the junior doctors, their senior counterparts as well as professors have been attending patients at the outpatient departments (OPDs), as well as the other departments. The junior doctors have been demanding the removal of Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal as they believe that the IPS officer has "failed" to carry out their duty in the wake of the rape and murder of the woman doctor.

They also held a rally to the Kolkata Police headquarters Lalbazar and handed over a deputation to Goyal demanding his resignation. Ironically, the junior doctors held a replica of a spine during their rally to the police headquarters mocking that the top cop was missing it. Though the state health department is "not ready" with the exact number of patients who have lost their lives allegedly after their treatments were delayed because of the ongoing cease-work, it claimed that the poor and marginalised class of the society were deeply affected by it.

Talking to PTI on condition of anonymity, an official of the state health department said there were reports of deaths of patients, but there was no proof whether they were directly or indirectly because of the cease work by junior doctors. "Healthcare services are badly hit. We know how we have been managing the huge flow of patients at the different hospitals. It's not an easy task," he told PTI.

According to a senior official of the SSKM Hospital, there has been a slump in the flow of patients during this period compared to what they normally witness. "Patient inflow has deteriorated. During the initial days, patients were coming but left without seeing the doctors because they were not there at the OPDs. Then we decided to push the senior doctors to attend to the patients. But, I think patients fearing rejection have chosen not to come," he said.

Arthritis and diabetic patient Sunirban Chatterjee said that he is continuing with the medicines prescribed earlier by doctors at the OPD of Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital. Debolina Dutta Ray, a high school teacher in Raiganj has skipped coming to Kolkata to consult doctors at the Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College and Hospital due to this ongoing crisis. *—PTI*

SALAR

TMC faces unprecedented challenge over Kolkata rape

Police stop BJYM activists during their protest of DC office against the rape and murder of a trainee doctor ***PHOTO: PTI***

The rape and murder of a woman doctor at RG Kar Hospital has triggered massive public outrage in West Bengal, creating a major political crisis for the ruling TMC and posing one of the biggest challenges to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's leadership since she took office in 2011.

The incident sparked a sustained mass movement transcending political affiliations, with citizens from all walks of life demanding justice and accountability, and its grassroots intensity and lack of overt political banners have made it the most formidable civil movement since Banerjee's rise to power, exposing deep-seated frustrations over governance and safety under her administration.

Political observers and leaders believe the sustained mass movement following the tragedy has created fertile ground for a new political party in West Bengal driven by ordinary citizens, students, and professionals disillusioned with the ruling TMC and opposition BJP and CPI(M).

"The movement's strength lies in its independence from traditional political banners, reflecting a broad demand for justice, transparency, and effective governance. It has exposed a leadership vacuum in the existing opposition parties that a new party could potentially fill by aligning with the protesters' calls for accountability," political scientist Maidul Islam said.

The young doctor, whose body was found on 9 August, was allegedly raped and murdered while on duty. A civic volunteer was arrested by Kolkata Police the next day.

The public reaction was intense, with thousands of medical professionals, students, activists, and ordinary citizens flooding the streets of Kolkata and other cities in protests marked by poignant displays of grief and anger.

Initially "slow and controversial" in its response, the TMC's handling of the case has been widely criticised as inadequate and reactive. The CM's public condemnation and promises of swift justice failed to quell public anger or restore faith in her administration's ability to protect its citizens.

A senior TMC leader told PTI on condition of anonymity that "while Kolkata Police arrested the main accused within 24 hours", administrative missteps and allegations from the victim's parents led to a public perception of government cover-up.

This left the party and administration struggling to counter the mass movement and on the defensive. TMC spokesperson Krishanu Mitra defended the party's commitment to justice by stating that "the protests prove there is a democratic space for agitation in West Bengal, unlike BJP-ruled states".

> The public reaction was intense, with thousands of medical professionals, students, activists, and ordinary citizens flooding the streets of Kolkata and other cities in protests marked by poignant displays of grief and anger

However, he admitted that the incident has put the TMC in a tight spot, despite its strong popular support, as opposition forces work to capitalise on the tragedy.

The incident has also brought out differences within the ruling TMC. TMC deputy leader in Rajya Sabha, Sukhendu Sekhar Ray, faced party backlash after publicly supporting the 'Reclaim the Night' programme and calling for the CBI to question arrested former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, Sandip Ghosh, and Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal.

Meanwhile, his colleague Jawhar Sircar announced his resignation from the Rajya Sabha and exited politics, citing frustration with the state government's inaction against corrupt doctors. "This incident poses one of the biggest challenges for the party as it is coming from a non-political force," a TMC leader said.

Opposition parties BJP and CPI(M) have swiftly capitalised on the tragedy to criticise the TMC's governance, launching aggressive campaigns that accuse the ruling party of failing to ensure basic safety for women.

"This is a direct consequence of the TMC's failure to provide a secure environment. Banerjee, who is also the home minister, must resign immediately," senior BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari said at a rally.

The CPI(M) emphasised the systemic governance failures that the incident has highlighted.

Political analysts pointed out that the opposition parties have failed to penetrate the mass movements organised by civil society, common people, and doctors.

"The RG Kar incident has again brought to the fore the power of civil society movements, which, during the last 13 years of the TMC regime, had been absent. Additionally, the failure of the BJP and CPI(M) to take the lead in this spontaneous mass movement has shown that people are yearning for a new political force to challenge the TMC," political scientist Biswanath Chakraborty said.

Echoing similar views, political analyst Suman Bhattacharya said that although there is a visible dent in TMC's urban votes, especially among women, the CPI(M) and BJP are unlikely to benefit from this.

"There is a visible attempt to build a new political force to take on the TMC, which can appeal to both liberal voters who are apathetic towards the BJP and a section of disillusioned urban and semi-urban voters who want an alternative to the TMC-BJP binary," he said.

Mitra also acknowledged that there is an attempt to create a new political force, but whether this effort will succeed remains to be seen.

Speaking about the future of the stir, Rimjhim Sinha, who launched the 'Reclaim the Night' initiative, described it as a new fight for women's freedom.

"I don't want to talk about politics, but the fact remains that all the political parties have failed to fight for the cause and rights of women. If the parties are not serious about fighting for our rights, we will fight it out on our own," she added. *—PTI*

LETTERS

Write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

RS ex-dy chairman Rahman Khan urges MPs to reject Waqf Amendment Bill

K Rahman Khan

Former Union Minister of Minority Affairs and ex-Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, K Rahman Khan, voiced strong opposition to the Waqf Amendment Bill, which is currently under scrutiny by a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). In a letter addressed to the Committee, Khan urged MPs to reject the proposed legislation, which aims to overhaul the Waqf Act of 1995. Khan claims the bill, introduced by Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju in Lok Sabha on 8 August, blatantly reflects prejudice. Khan headed two JPCs.

Here is the letter:

The Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024: A Critique of Prejudice and iii-Will

In my long tenure of 24 years in Parliament, during which I had the privilege to serve as the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha for eight years, I have witnessed the introduction of numerous legislative measures aimed at improving governance, advancing social justice, and fostering economic progress. However, I must express my deep concern and disappointment regarding the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024. Never before have I encountered legislation that so blatantly reflects prejudice and ill will.

The Waqf Amendment Bill, as presented, appears to be a deviation from the spirit of fairness and constitutional values that guide our law-making process. It seeks to amend existing provisions governing Waqf properties, institutions that are historically and culturally significant for the Muslim community.

Lack of Consultation and Due Process

The very foundation of a successful democracy is built on consultation, dialogue, and mutual respect for diverse perspectives. Unfortunately, in the case of the Waqf Amendment Bill, the lack of meaningful consultation with key stakeholders, including the Waqf Boards and the Muslim community, is glaring. This oversight not only raises questions about the legitimacy of the proposed changes but also points to a deeper malaise—a disregard for the voices of the minority communities affected by these amendments.

Disempowerinq the Waqf Boards

The amendments seem to disempower the Waqf Boards, which have historically played a crucial role in safeguarding and managing Waqf properties. Instead of strengthening their capacity to manage these assets effectively, the Bill appears to curtail their autonomy.

A Call for Reconsideration

The Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, in its present form, not only fails to meet these standards but also risks further alienating communities that already feel marginalized. I urge the Parliament to engage in a more inclusive and transparent process, wherein the concerns of all stakeholders are addressed with sincerity and fairness.

A Flawed Justification for Unjust Amendments

In the statement of objects and reasons for the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, the government claims that the Bill is based on the recommendations of the high-level committee chaired by Justice Rajinder Sachar, the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Waqf, and the Central Waqf Council. It is further asserted that the amendments proposed in 2013, following detailed consultation with stakeholders, are insufficient, and thus, additional amendments are needed to address concerns relating to state Waqf Boards, the registration and survey of Wakf properties, and the removal of encroachments, among other issues.

However, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the 2024 Bill does not build upon the 2013 amendments but rather undermines the comprehensive reforms painstakingly crafted through dialogue with all relevant stakeholders. The amendments of 2013 were the result of a wide- ranging consultation process, drawing from two committee reports and with input from those most affected by Waqf legislation.

Violation of Constitutional Rights

The Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, is not only a retrograde step in terms of policy but also contravenes several key provisions of the Constitution. By stripping the Waqf Boards of their autonomy and eroding the safeguards for Waqf properties, the Bill is in direct violation of Articles 14, 25, 26,

PHOTO: X

and 29 of the Constitution.

Article 14: It guarantees equality before the law, is violated by the Bill's arbitrary concentration of power in the hands of government-appointed officials, leaving the Waqf Boards without any real authority or independence.

Articles 25 and 26: It protect religious freedom and the right to manage religious affairs, are similarly undermined. Waqf properties, which have been established through the contributions of the Muslim community and are meant to serve charitable and religious purposes, are being brought under state control, stripping the community of its right to manage its own affairs

Article 29: It safeguards the cultural and educational rights of minorities, is also at stake, as the Bill's provisions erode the foundations of Waqf institutions, which are not only religious but also cultural in their significance to the Muslim community.

Undermining the Autonomy of Waqf Boards

Perhaps the most alarming aspect of this Bill is its blatant attempt to strip the Waqf Boards of their autonomy. While the 2013 amendments aimed to empower the elected Waqf Boards to manage and protect Waqf properties effectively, the 2024 Bill seeks to reverse this progress. By converting the Waqf Boards into fully nominated bodies, the Bill removes the element of community representation and accountability. What was once an elected body, responsible to the people and the Waqf institutions, will now be dominated by government nominees, with little regard for the interests or concerns of the Muslim community.

Moreover, the Bill withdraws the powers of the Waqf tribunals, which were established to ensure fair adjudication of disputes relating to Waqf properties. By removing these tribunals, the Bill leaves the fate of Waqf properties in the hands of the district collector—an unelected bureaucrat who is often disconnected from the specific needs and concerns of the local Waqf institutions and the community they serve.

No Contribution From The Government

One of the most glaring ironies of the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, is that the government is seeking to exert greater control over Waqf properties— despite having made no contribution to their creation. Waqf properties are not state assets; they are the result of centuries of charitable endowments made by individuals from the Muslim community for religious and social purposes. These properties have historically been managed by the community itself, through the Wakf Boards, with the government playing only a regulatory role.

A Deeply Prejudiced Bill

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024, has been drafted with an intent to undermine the Waqf system, marginalize the Muslim community, and erode their rights over religious and charitable endowments. Whoever has drafted this legislation has done so with a mindset of prejudice and hostility toward the Waqf system, its properties, and the community it serves. *—Salar News*

K Rahman Khan was the former-union minister of minority affairs, former deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Algerian President wins second term in landslide

ALGIERS, 9 SEPT

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the victor in Algeria's presidential election, winning in a landslide marred by low voter turnout and claims of irregularities from his detractors in the gas-rich North African nation. The country's independent election authority on Sunday announced that Tebboune had won 94.7 per cent of Saturday's vote, far outpacing his challengers Islamist Abdelali Hassani Cherif, who received only 3.2 per cent and socialist Youcef Aouchiche, who got just 2.2 per cent. Tebboune's total vote share was far more than the 87 per cent that Vladimir Putin won in Russia's March elections and the 92 per cent that Ilham Aliyev got in Azerbaijan's February contest. *—AP*

6 injured in explosion in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, 9 SEPT

At least six people, including three policemen, were injured in a bomb explosion that targeted a vehicle carrying workers associated with the Pakistan Polio Programme in the country's restive northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, authorities said on Monday. The explosion resulted in injuries to three frontline polio workers and three policemen in South Waziristan district's Wana town. The injured were immediately shifted to a hospital and their condition is stated to be stable. Police contingents rushed to the explosion site and launched a combing operation to arrest the accused. Authorities last week reported its first polio case in the capital Islamabad in the last 16 years, a setback to the national efforts aimed at eradicating the virus from the country. *—PTI*

13 Pakistani policemen injured in clash with mob

KARACHI, 9 SEPT

At least 13 policemen were injured in Pakistan after they clashed with a mob protesting against the disappearance of a youth in the Badin district of the Sindh province, according to the police. The incident took place in the Allah Khan Magsi village on Saturday. "The policemen were injured after they tried to disperse a mob of angry tribesmen from the Magsi clan who were protesting the disappearance of one of their youth," police said. The youth was picked up by the police in connection with a motorcycle theft and disappeared from the lock-up on Saturday. The mob got violent when police claimed he was freed by a group of armed men, who took him with them. *—PTI*

Afganistan's London embassy to shut amid tensions

LONDON, 9 SEPT

Afghanistan's embassy in London is being shut down after it was disowned by the country's Taliban rulers, the UK government said Monday. The Foreign Office said "the embassy is being closed following the dismissal of its staff by the Taliban." Britain does not recognise the Taliban government. Ambassador Zalmai Rassoul wrote on X that the embassy would shut its doors on 27 September"at the official request of the host country." Neither the UK government nor the ambassador said what would happen to the embassy's staff. Many embassies in Europe and beyond have continued to operate, but have been accused by Kabul of failing to cooperate with the government. Afghanistan has sent Taliban-approved diplomats to some countries, including Pakistan and China.*—PTI*

Israeli strikes in Syria kill 14, leaves 40 injured

A chemical arms military centre was hit multiple times

DAMASCUS, 9 SEPT

Israeli missiles have killed at least 16 people in central Syria, state media outlets have reported.

The attack on Sunday night sparked a fire and caused material damage near the city of Masyaf, in the Hama province, according to SANA, Syria's official news agency. The latest update on Monday after-noon, which also reported 36 injured, raised the toll of 14 dead reported earlier.

"At around 23:20 on Sunday evening, the Israeli enemy launched an air aggression from the direction of northwestern Lebanon, targeting a number of military sites in the central region [of Syria]," a mili-tary source told the SANA news agency.

"Our air defence systems confronted the aggression's missiles and shot down some of them," the source added, without providing further details.

The Israeli military commonly does not comment on its operations in Syria.

Two regional intelligence sources said a major military research centre for chemical arms production located near Masyaf had been hit several times, Reuters reported. A team of Iranian military experts involved in weapons production was believed to be working at the site, the news agency added.

The recent attack comes amid growing regional tensions with Iranian officials still pledging to respond to the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July *PHOTO: PTI*

'Harsh punishment'

Israeli jets have often launched attacks against Syria from Lebanon, likely in a bid to avoid Syrian air-space where multiple regional and international forces, including those of Russia and the United States, operate.

Throughout Syria's 13-year civil war, Israel has regularly carried out air raids in the country – mostly targeting Iran-linked sites.

Sunday's attack comes amid growing regional tensions, with Iranian officials still pledging to respond to the assassination of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July. Iran, which maintains a military presence in Syria, had promised "harsh punishment" for Israel over the killing, but no Iranian attack has materialised more than 40 days after the assassination.

Iran launched a direct attack on Israel with hundreds of drones and missiles in April in response to the Israeli bombing of an Iranian diplomatic facility in Damascus.

Israeli and US air defences in the region helped shoot down most of the projectiles, minimising the damage of the attack. Separately, Hezbollah carried out its own attack against Israel on August 25, responding to the killing of one of its top commanders in an Israeli air raid in Beirut which also killed several civilians. *—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera*

FIRST FACE OFF

Trump, Harris in a tie ahead of debate

Donald Trump *PHOTO: PTI*

Kamala Harris *PHOTO: PTI*

WASHINGTON DC, 9 SEPT

The US presidential race remains neck-and-neck according to polls released two days before Kamala Harris and Donald Trump hold their first – and potentially only – televised debate.

The latest polling confirms that Trump retains locked-in support from about half of voters, despite the Republican's historic status as a convicted criminal and his role in instigating the unprecedented attempt to overturn his 2020 loss to Joe Biden.

Harris, who only jumped into the race after President Biden quit in July, has rapidly transformed herself from a little-noticed vice president into a serious contender. However, the polls show she has not made a major breakthrough, leaving the race a toss-up.

A New York Times/Siena College poll suggested that 78-year-old Trump leads Harris nationally by 48 to 47 percent, well within the margin of error.

US presidential elections are decided by tallying the results of state-by-state contests, rather than an overall national popular vote.

The poll suggested that Harris, 59, was narrowly ahead in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania, and tied in four other swing states: Nevada, Georgia, North Carolina and Arizona.

A CBS News/YouGov poll put Harris ahead by one percentage point in Michigan and Wisconsin and tied in Pennsylvania.

The election is already chaotic, with 81-year-old Biden dropping out amid concerns over his age, Trump narrowly surviving an assassin's bullet at a rally, and growing fears that Trump will again refuse to concede if he loses in November.

However, the latest numbers confirm that each candidate retains a remarkably stable base of loyalists, almost evenly splitting the country.

—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

Germany accuses Russia of cyberattacks on NATO, EU states

BERLIN, 9 SEPT

Russia's GRU military intelligence service has been carrying out cyberattacks against NATO and Euro-pean Union countries, Germany's domestic intelligence agency (BfV) has warned.

The BfV said in a statement released on Monday that a cyber-warfare group belonging to the infamous GRU Unit 29155 is engaged in malicious activities targeting critical infrastructure globally, including in the United States.

The statement, titled a Joint Cybersecurity Advisory, was issued by the BfV alongside the Federal Bu-reau of Investigation (FBI), the US Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the National Security Agency (NSA), and other international partners.

It warned that cyber-actors affiliated with the GRU's 161st Specialist Training Center (Unit 29155) "are held responsible for computer network operations against global targets for the purposes of espionage, sabotage, and reputational harm". Unit 29155 is associated with foreign assassinations and other activities aimed at destabilising Western countries. The unit is suspected of leading several high-profile operations.BfV said that alongside international partners, it remains "committed to protecting freedom and de-mocracy from foreign interference, cyberattacks and malicious actors".

—Courtesy, Al-Jazeera

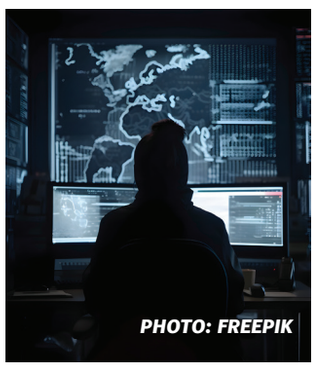


PHOTO: FREEPIK

59 dead as typhoon Yagi ravages Vietnam

HANOI, 9 SEPT

A bridge collapsed and a bus was swept away by flooding Monday as more rain fell following a ty-phoon in Vietnam that has caused at least 59 deaths in the Southeast Asian country and disrupted busi-nesses and factories in the export-focused northern industrial hubs, state media reported.

Nine people died when Typhoon Yagi made landfall in Vietnam on Saturday before weakening to a tropical depression, and at least 50 others have died in the consequent floods and landslides, state me-dia VN Express reported. The water levels of several rivers in northern Vietnam were dangerously high.

A passenger bus carrying 20 people was swept into a flooded stream by a landslide in mountainous Cao Bang province Monday morning. Rescuers were deployed but landslides blocked their path.

In Phu Tho province, rescue operations were continuing after a steel bridge over the engorged Red River collapsed Monday morning. Reports said 10 cars and trucks along with two motorbikes fell into the river. Three people were pulled out of the river and taken to the hospital, but 13 others were miss-ing.

A bridge collapse due to typhoon Yagi in Phu Tho province, in Vietnam on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Dozens of businesses in Haiphong province hadn't resumed production by Monday because of the ex-tensive damage to their factories, reported state media Lao Dong newspaper. The report said that the roofs of several factories were blown apart while water had seeped into industrial units, damaging fin-ished goods and expensive equipment. Some companies said they still didn't have electricity on Mon-day and that it would take at least a month to be able to resume production.

Toppled electricity poles meant that Haiphong and Quang Ninh provinces were still without power on Monday. Authorities are still assessing the damage to industrial units but initial estimates show that nearly 100 enterprises were damaged by the typhoon, resulting in losses amounting to millions of dollars, reported the newspaper.

—AP

8 Taliban soldiers killed by Pak forces

ISLAMABAD/PESHAWAR, 9 SEPT

At least eight Afghan Taliban soldiers, including two key commanders, have been killed in a fierce clash with the Pakistani security forces in the border region near the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The exchange, which was reported in the Khurram border district of the province over the weekend, also injured 16 Afghan Taliban soldiers.

The Afghan side attacked a Pakistani checkpost with heavy weapons in the Palosin area on the Pak-Afghan border on Saturday morning, the Dawn newspaper reported, quoting sources.

There was no official word on the incident from the Pakistan military's media wing - the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

This is not the first time Afghan troops have opened fire on Pakistani security forces posted at the bor-der.

In the past, Islamabad shared its concerns with Kabul over such incidents.

Due to the tense security situation, trade between the two countries remained suspended over the weekend.

—PTI

Due to the tense security situation, trade between the two countries remained suspended over the weekend *PHOTO: AMU.TV*

52 killed in fuel tanker collision in Nigeria

ABUJA, 9 SEPT

A fuel tanker collided head-on with another truck in Nigeria on Sunday causing an explosion that killed at least 52 people, the country's emergency response agency said.

The fuel tanker was also carrying cattle in the Agaie area in north-central Niger state and at least 50 of them were burned alive, Abdullahi Baba-Arab, director-general of the Niger State Emergency Management Agency, said.

Search and rescue operations were underway at the scene of the accident, Baba-Arab said.

Baba-Arab said initially that 30 bodies were found but in a later statement said an additional 18 bodies of victims who were burned to death in the collision were found. He said the dead had been given a mass burial.

In 2020 alone, there were 1,531 gasoline tanker crashes resulting in 535 fatalities and 1,142 injuries, according to Nigeria's Federal Road Safety Corps. *—AP*

PHOTO: XINHUA

China announces joint naval, air drills with Russia

BEIJING, 9 SEPT

China's Defence Ministry on Monday announced joint naval and air drills with Russia starting this month, underscoring the closeness between their militaries as Russia presses its grinding invasion of Ukraine.

The ministry said the "Northern United-2024" exercises would take place in the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk farther north, but gave no details.

It said the naval and air drills aimed to improve strategic cooperation between the two countries and "strengthen their ability to jointly deal with security threats."

The notice also said the two navies would cruise together in the Pacific, the fifth time they have done so, and together take part in Russia's "Great Ocean-24" exercise. No details were given.

While China has not directly provided Russia with arms, it has become a crucial economic lifeline as a top customer for Russian oil and gas as well as a supplier of electronics and other items with both civil-ian and military uses.

—AP

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

No spl treatment for celebrity pastor, says Philippine Prez

A co-accused and Apollo Quiboloy at the police headquarters in Manila on Monday *PHOTO: X@AJENGLISH*

MANILA, 9 SEPT

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr has pledged that evangelist preacher Apollo Quiboloy will re-ceive no special treatment following his arrest.

A weeks-long manhunt ended over the weekend when Quiboloy, a self-proclaimed "son of god", was arrested on charges of child and sexual abuse and allegations of human trafficking.

The preacher, a longtime ally of former president Rodrigo Duterte whose sect boasts of millions of followers, is also wanted in the United States on charges of sex trafficking and bulk cash smuggling.

"There is no special treatment," Marcos told reporters on Monday. "We will not violate any of his rights and will not ignore any of his requests, whatever they are.

"We will demonstrate once again that our judicial system in the Philippines is active, vibrant and work-ing," the president added. Quiboloy has rejected all charges against him but went into hiding after two courts issued arrest warrants against him in April.

Marcos administration deployed more than 2,000 police to search his sprawling church compound in the southern Davao City, on suspicion that he was hiding there in a bunker. Philippine police spokesman Jean Fajardo said on Sunday that Quiboloy was captured on Sunday inside the compound.

But Quiboloy's lawyer, Israelito Torreon, disputed the government's account, saying the pastor surren-dered to the police and military because he did not want the situation to further escalate. "The innocence of Quiboloy will be affirmed by the court," Torreon told DZBB radio.

Marcos said Quiboloy's camp had set conditions for his surrender, including a guarantee he would not be sent to the US to face charges.

But Marcos said that "putting conditions is not an option for someone who is a fugitive".

—Courtesy, Al Jazeera

Gold slumps ₹700; silver plummets ₹2,000

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Gold prices slumped Rs 700 to Rs 73,500 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday amid a decline in precious metal rates in the global markets. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 74,200 per 10 grams in the previous close on Friday. Tracking gold, silver prices also plummeted Rs 2,000 to Rs 83,800 per kilogram on Monday on subdued offtake from industrial units and coin makers, according to the All India Sarafa Association. In the previous session, the silver metal had finished at Rs 85,800 per kg. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also plunged Rs 500 to Rs 73,350 per 10 grams from Rs 73,850 in the previous close. Globally, Comex gold is trading at 0.07 per cent lower at USD 2,522.90 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee slips 1 paisa to 83.96 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 9 SEPT

The rupee traded in a narrow range and slipped 1 paisa to close at 83.96 against the American currency on Monday, as the support from a positive trend in equity markets was offset by a strong US dollar against major crosses overseas. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.96 against the American currency. It rose to the intraday high of 83.86 but pared gains to finally settle at 83.96 against the US dollar, down 1 paisa from its previous close. On Friday, the rupee gained 2 paise to close at 83.95 against the US dollar. The dollar index, rose 0.37 per cent to 101.54. *—PTI*

Gujarat hydropower generation sees record surge

GANDHINAGAR, 9 SEPT

In August 2024, Gujarat's hydropower plants achieved a remarkable electricity generation of 1,067.3 million units (MU), a significant increase from the 308.7 MU recorded in July 2024. This surge is largely attributed to the state's dams reaching full capacity due to the abundant water inflows during the monsoon season. The Sardar Sarovar Dam, a key player in Gujarat's water and energy management, alone generated over 800 MU of electricity, with a total of 891 MU coming from both the Sardar Sarovar River Bed Power House (RBPH) and Canal Head Power House (CHPH). The detailed breakdown of hydropower generation in August 2024 highlights impressive increases across various plants. Gujarat is making advancements in its renewable energy sector, contributing to India's clean energy goals. *—ANI*

PHOTO: ANI

Actor Mahesh Babu's firm invests in Fitday startup

HYDERABAD, 9 SEPT

Telugu Superstar Mahesh Babu's firm GMB Entertainment has invested an undisclosed sum in Fitday, a nutraceutical startup. A press release from the city-based firm said the strategic investment marks a significant milestone in Fitday's mission to revolutionise the nutrition and healthy snacking industry. With a presence in over 10,000 stores, Fitday has established a strong foundation in the retail market. Babu's investment will help amplify the startup's retail footprint and support its expansion into new markets, it said. Expressing his enthusiasm about the partnership, Babu said, "I'm thrilled to support Fitday's pioneering work in the nutrition, snack, and nutraceutical markets. Their commitment to innovation and quality deeply resonates with my values. I believe their new product line will set industry standards. *—PTI*

Deliberating on reducing health insurance tax: FM

FM says a committee will look into formula for sharing IGST

KOLKATA, 8 SEPT

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said the GST Council discussed the issue of reducing taxes on medical and health insurance and it was felt that more discussions were needed with regard to group insurance policies by resident welfare associations and companies as well as premiums paid by senior citizens and life insurance vis-a-vis term insurance

"So the insurance-related matter the Council felt because of the various dimensions that came in, it might be worth the Group of Ministers to quickly look into it and by end of October to come up with their suggestion so that the November GST Council meeting could take a call on it," Sitharaman told reporters here.

The members of the GoM on GST on health insurance would include ministers from Bihar, UP, West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Meghalaya, Goa, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Gujarat.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chairs the 54th meeting of the GST Council, in New Delhi, on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Currently, 18 per cent GST is levied on health and life insurance premiums. Referring to the issue of GST exemption on funds received by institutions for R&D, Sitharaman said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked her to exempt such funds from the tax.

"This whole issue of research-related funds going to institutions and notice that has gone to seven such institutions was not an attempt to tax terrorism. Where there are interpretation-related issues, an officer in the field will surely want to be sure that he is doing his job, collecting the money that he should collect because some of these research funds which have gone to such institutions had a component that they could be some kind of a quid pro quo," Sitharaman said.

Sitharaman further said that a committee of officers, headed by Additional Secretary (Revenue), will look into the formula for sharing Integrated GST (IGST) between Centre and states. *—PTI*

SENSEX CLOSES AT 376 PTS

Market snaps 4-day losing rally

NSE Nifty went up by 84.25 points or 0.34 per cent to finish at 24,936.40 after three days of fall *PHOTO: PTI*

MUMBAI, 9 SEPT

Benchmark Sensex bounced back from early lows and closed higher by nearly 376 points on Monday, snapping its four-day losing run following a rally in blue-chips ICICI Bank, HUL and HDFC Bank.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rebounded 375.61 points or 0.46 per cent to settle at 81,559.54. The index opened lower and hit a low of 80,895.05 points in early trade. Later, it recovered from lows and jumped 469.43 points or 0.57 per cent to hit the day's high of 81,653.36.

The NSE Nifty went up by 84.25 points or 0.34 per cent to finish at 24,936.40 after three days of fall.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank, ITC, Kotak Mahindra Bank, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement and HDFC Bank were the biggest gainers.

Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, NTPC, Tata Motors, Power Grid and Titan were among the biggest laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower. *—PTI*

Ather, Bajaj & others file IPO on day 1 with big hopes

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Electric two-wheeler maker Ather Energy on Monday filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator SEBI to raise funds through an Initial Public Offering (IPO). The proposed IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 3,100 crore and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of 2.2 crore equity shares by promoters and investors shareholders, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP).

Western Carriers'

Logistics company Western Carriers (India) Ltd is set to launch its initial share sale for public subscription on 13 September.

The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 500 crore and an Offer For Sale (OFS) of up to 54 lakh equity shares by promoter Rajendra Sethia.

Bajaj Housing Finance

Rs 6,560-crore initial public offer of Bajaj Housing Finance got fully subscribed within hours of opening for bidding on Monday.

The initial share sale received bids for 73,02,58,736 shares against 72,75,75,756 shares on offer, reflecting a one-time subscription, as per NSE data till 14:03 hours.

The price band for the offer has been fixed at Rs 66-70 per share.

iValue Infosolutions

Private equity firm Creador-backed iValue Infosolutions Ltd has filed draft papers with markets regulator Sebi to float an initial public offering.

The Bengaluru-based company's IPO is completely Offer for Sale (OFS) of up to 1.87 crore equity shares by promoters and investor shareholders, according to the Draft

PHOTO: ANI

Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP).

Tolins Tyres'

The initial public offer of Tolins Tyres got fully subscribed hours after opening for subscription on Monday.

The initial share sale received bids for 83,90,976 shares against 74,88,372 shares on offer, as per NSE data till 13:51 hours, translating into 1.12 times subscription.

Tolins Tyres Ltd on Friday announced that it has mopped up Rs 69 crore from anchor investors. *—PTI*

India, Japan agree to promote bilateral ties

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

India and Japan have agreed to promote financial cooperation and strengthen bilateral relations at the second India-Japan Finance Dialogue in Tokyo, a finance ministry statement said.

The participants exchanged their views on the macroeconomic situation in both countries.

The participants were also joined by representatives of Japan's financial services industry for a session to discuss various financial regulatory issues towards further expansion of investment in India, it said.

Both sides agreed to continue discussions for further promoting financial cooperation and strengthening bilateral relations, and agreed to explore holding the next round of the Dialogue in New Delhi. The second India-Japan Finance Dialogue was held in Tokyo on 6 September. *—PTI*

Adani Green redeems ₹62,000 crore bonds

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL), the renewable energy arm of the ports-to power conglomerate run by billionaire Gautam Adani, on Monday said it has redeemed USD 750 million worth of bonds as it deleverages business.

In a statement, the firm said it has completed "redemption of all outstanding USD 750 million 4.375 per cent Holdco Notes due on 8 September, 2024."

Issued in September 2021, the three-year Holdco Notes supported AGEL's high-growth objectives. During the period, AGEL's capacity has increased more than three-fold - from 3.5 gigawatt (GW) to 11.2 GW, registering a CAGR (compounded annual growth rate) of 48 per cent.

The company had in January stated it would pay USD 169 million from its reserves and internal accruals, and USD 300 million from the consideration from a joint venture with TotalEnergies Renewables. The remaining USD 281 million was to come from the initial tranche from a preferential issue of warrants.

AGEL is India's largest renewable energy company and develops, owns, and operates utility-scale grid-connected solar, wind, hybrid, and hydro-pumped storage renewable power plants. *—PTI*

FPIs seek legal route to dodge SEBI norms

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Some FPIs have sought Legal Avenue to avoid complying with rules requiring disclosure of ultimate beneficial ownership (BO) to the markets regulator SEBI as the deadline expired on Monday.

Two Mauritius-based foreign portfolio investors -- LTS Investment Fund and Lotus Global Investment -- have reportedly approached the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT) to seek urgent relief from adhering to SEBI's new norms for foreign investors.

These two FPIs were named in the January 2023 report on Adani Group by the US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research.

SEBI set a deadline of 9 September for non-compliant FPIs that fail to provide detailed ownership disclosures to sell off their excess holdings and correct their violations.

In August 2023, SEBI came

PHOTO: PTI

out with a circular, whereby it directed FPIs with over 50 per cent of their equity assets under management (AUM) in a single corporate group, or with total holdings in Indian equity markets exceeding Rs 25,000 crore, to disclose detailed information on all entities that have any ownership, economic interest, or control in the FPI.

The move by SEBI had its genesis in the Adani issue where the markets regulator could not identify the beneficial owners of some foreign portfolio investments in Adani stocks since the existing regulations were lax in identifying the true owners of many investments. *—PTI*

'NOT AGAINST ANY SUBSIDIES'

EVs will cost same as petrol and diesel in 2 years, says Gadkari

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, said that the cost of electric vehicles (EVs) in India will be on par with petrol and diesel vehicles within the next two years.

Speaking at the 64th ACMA Annual Session, Gadkari, a longtime advocate for electric mobility, also reflected on the scepticism he faced a decade ago from major automobile manufacturers.

"Ten years ago, when I was pushing for EVs, automobile giants in India didn't take me seriously. Now, they tell me they may have missed the bus," Gadkari remarked, emphasising how the industry's perspective on EVs has drastically shifted.

Gadkari said within two years, the cost of EVs will be the same with their petrol and diesel counterparts.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari at the 64th ACMA Annual Session on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

"First of all, I am not against any subsidies. I don't have any problem," Gadkari said when asked if more incentives were needed to accelerate electric mobility as adoption has not been as expected.

Elaborating his views, he said at one point the price of the lithium ion battery was USD 150 per kilowatt hour. Now it is something USD 108 to 110 per kilowatt hour.

On the issue of extending incentives to EVs, Gadkari said still if the finance minister and if they want to give subsidies it will be beneficial for automotive industry.

The minister also expressed confidence that India can become the number one automotive manufacturing hub in the world saying that the future of this industry is very bright. *—PTI*

'TREND OF STRONG FDI TO BOOST IN NEXT QUARTERS'

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

With foreign direct investments (FDI) growing 47.8 per cent to USD 16.17 billion during April-June 2024, India is expected to see further acceleration in the inflow on account of a potential Fed rate cut, modest growth outlook in the US, and the country's favourable economic outlook, experts say.

They also said that investment destinations have changed over the decade and have got more diversified, with capital into sectors.

Compared to eight years ago, power, construction, healthcare, chemicals, and non-conventional energy have now been attractive investment destinations, Rumki Majumdar, Economist, Deloitte India, said.

With the US elections coming up, one may have to wait and watch the impact of FDI inflows over the next few months, but the overall outlook remains positive. *—PTI*

MONOPOLY CASE

Google faces new antitrust trial over its ad business

ALEXANDRIA, 9 SEPT

One month after a judge declared Google's search engine an illegal monopoly, the tech giant faces another antitrust lawsuit that threatens to break up the company, this time over its advertising technology.

The Justice Department and a coalition of states contend that Google built and maintains a monopoly over the technology that matches online publishers to advertisers. Dominance over the software on both the buy side and the sell side of the transaction enables Google to keep as much as 36 cents on the dollar when it brokers sales between publishers and advertisers, the government contends in court papers.

Google says the government's case is based on an internet of yesteryear, when desktop computers ruled and internet users carefully typed precise World Wide Web addresses into URL fields. Advertisers now are more likely to turn to social media companies like TikTok or streaming TV services like Peacock to reach audiences.

In recent years, Google Networks, the division of the Mountain View, California-based tech giant that includes such services as AdSense and Google Ad Manager that are at the heart of the case, actually have seen declining revenue, from USD 31.7 billion in 2021 to USD 31.3 billion in 2023, according to the company's annual reports.

The trial over the alleged ad tech monopoly begins Monday

One month after a judge declared Google's search engine an illegal monopoly, the tech giant faces another antitrust lawsuit *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

in Alexandria, Virginia. It initially was going to be a jury trial, but Google maneuvered to force a bench trial, writing a check to the federal government for more than USD 2 million to moot the only claim brought by the government that required a jury.

- Google says the government's case is improperly focused on display ads and banner ads that load on web pages accessed through a desktop computer and fails to take into account consumers' migration

The case will now be decided by US District Judge Leonie Brinkema, who was appointed to the bench by former President Bill Clinton and is best known for high-profile terrorism trials including September 11 defendant Zacarias Moussaoui. Brinkema, though, also has experience with highly technical civil trials, working in a courthouse that sees an outsize number of patent infringement cases.

Google says the government's case is improperly focused on display ads and banner ads that load on web pages accessed through a desktop computer and fails to take into account consumers' migration to mobile apps and the boom in ads placed on social media sites over the last 15 years.

Even the lawyers, and there are many on both sides, are limited in their technology. At a pretrial hearing Wednesday, Google's lawyers made a plea to be allowed more than the two computers each side is permitted to have in the courtroom during trial. Brinkema rejected it. *—PTI*

Grit, poise, talent defines Sinner

At 23, Sinner is the 3rd youngest player to win the Cincinnati Open and the US Open during the same season in the Open Era

Jannik Sinner in action on Monday in New York
PHOTO:X/ @ROLANDGARROS

NEW YORK, 9 SEPT

Jannik Sinner started slowly at the US Open, dropping the first set he played after being exonerated in a doping case no one knew about until shortly before play began at Flushing Meadows.

If that episode initially hung over him during the tournament, Sinner was able to put it aside while on court. Was he ever. The No. 1-ranked Sinner beat Taylor Fritz 6-3, 6-4, 7-5 with his typical relentless baseline game to win the men's championship at Arthur Ashe Stadium on Sunday, less than three weeks after word emerged of his two positive drug tests.

As expected, Fritz enjoyed something of a home-court advantage. Fritz is not the sort to show much emotion beyond a shake of his neon-coloured racket, even after he went up 3-2 after 20 minutes.

After Fritz deposited a volley winner to earn a break point a minute later, he celebrated in the same fashion, and thousands in the seats went wild. Sinner then double-faulted, putting Fritz in front 4-3. But when he tried to serve out the set at 5-4, Fritz buckled enough to let Sinner pull even by breaking. Sinner used a drop shot to lure Fritz to the front court, then slid a passing shot that Fritz volleyed into the net. Fritz bounced his racket off the court. Sinner loped to the towel box, not even smiling.

"This title, for me, means so much," said Sinner, a 23-year-old from Italy, "because the last period of my career was really not easy".

Andy Roddick's triumph at Flushing Meadows in 2003 was the last Slam title for a man from the United States. The last before Fritz, a 26-year-old from California, to even contest a final at one of the four big-gest tournaments in tennis also was Roddick, who lost to Roger Federer at Wimbledon in 2009.

—PTI

TURNED PRO: 2018

CURRENT RANKING: 1

MATCH DURATION: 2.16 hrs

MATCH POINTS:

SET 1	SET 2	SET 3
6-3	6-4	7-5

15 TITLES WON SO FAR

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1	4	1	4	5

CELEBRITIES SPOTTED AT THE GAME

Taylor Swift

Bon Jovi

Matthew McConaughey

BEST SHOW AT THE SLAMS

US OPEN	AUSTRALIAN OPEN	WIMBLEDON	US OPEN	FRENCH OPEN
Champion (2024)	Champion (2024)	Semifinal (2023)	Quarterfinal (2022)	Quarterfinal (2020)

India wins 21 medals in Deaf Shooting C'ships

Indian contingent poses for a group photograph on Monday
PHOTO: X/@SAIMEDIA

NEW DELHI, 9 SEPT

India won 21 medals, including seven gold, to top the tally at the second World Deaf Shooting Champion-ships in Hanover, Germany, the NRAI said on Monday.

India also won seven silver and as many bronze medals in the tournament which concluded on Sunday. Ukraine finished second with seven gold, five silver and six bronze and hosts Germany were third with two gold, one silver and one bronze medal, according to a release from National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

On the final day of competitions, Mahit Sandhu clinched the gold medal in women's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P). Abhinav Deshwal secured gold in the men's 25m standard pistol event while Chetan Hanmant Sap-kal secured bronze in the same event. The Indian team of 13 shooters participated in 15 out of the 16 events at the championships which had 70 participants from 16 countries.

- On the final day of competitions, Mahit Sandhu clinched the gold medal in women's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P). Abhinav Deshwal secured gold in the men's 25m standard pistol event while Chetan Hanmant Sap-kal secured bronze in the same event

Pistol shooter Deshwal won five medals -- one gold and four silver -- to return home with the most num-ber of individual medals. Sandhu won four medals -- three gold and one silver -- in the rifle events.

Dhanush Srikanth won two gold medals in 10m air rifle individual and mixed events. Anuya Prasad (women's 10m air pistol) and Shourya Saini (men's 50m 3P) won the other gold medals for the Indian team. The Indians also went on to break multiple deaf world records and championship records in the event.

—PTI

PHOTO: X@THEHOCKEYINDIA

India beat Japan 5-1 in Asian C'pions Trophy

HULUNBUIR, 9 SEPT

Sukhjeet Singh struck a brace as defending champi-ons India thrashed Japan 5-1 in a league match to notch up their second con-secutive win in the men's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament here on Monday. Sukhjeet scored in the second and 60th min-utes while Abhishek (3rd), Sanjay (17th) and Uttam Singh (54th) were the other Indian goal getters. Matsumoto Kazumasa pulled one back for Japan in the 41st minute. Four-time champions India, who had beaten China 3-0 in their opening round-robin league match on Sunday, got two penalty corners as against five of Japan. The Harmanpreet Singh-led side will meet last-edition's runners-up side Malaysia on Wednesday, as Tuesday is a rest day. *—PTI*

Lanka beat Eng by 8 wickets for 4th test victory

LONDON, 9 SEPT

Sri Lanka earned their only fourth Test victory on English soil after an unbeaten century by open-er Pathum Nissanka helped the visitors secure an eight-wicket win in the third and final match of the series against England at The Oval here on Monday. England won the series 2-1 but missed out on a second clean sweep of its interna-tional summer, having defeated the West Indies 3-0 in July. Starting Day 4 on 94-1 and requiring 125 more runs to win, the Sri Lankans needed barely two hours to complete the job in clinical fashion. The plat-form was built on Sunday when they skittled England for 156 in just 34 overs and were given a victory target of 219. Nissanka under-pinned the chase with his second test hundred, reach-ing three figures in 107 balls and finishing 127 not out as Sri Lanka got to 219 in 40.3 overs. Fittingly, it was Nissanka who scored the clinching runs with a cut for four. *—AP*

PARIS 2024

BRILLIANT PARALYMPIANS

GOLD MEDALS	SILVER MEDALS	BRONZE MEDALS	TOTAL: 29
7	9	13	

PARIS 2024

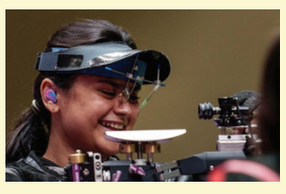
Indian athletics contingent put up a sensational show in the Paris Paralympics by clinching 29 medals. Here is a look at the achievements of the players

NAVDEEP SINGH, 23, Haryana
Singh won Gold Men's Javelin F41
Physical challenge: Dwarfism

HARVINDER SINGH, 33, Haryana
Singh won Gold in Men's individual Recurve Archery
Physical challenge: He has impairment in both legs

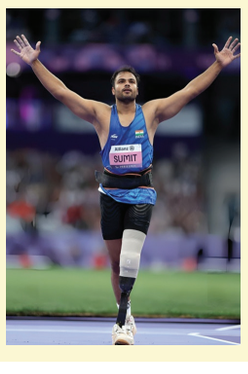
AVANI LEKHARA, 22, Rajasthan
Gold in Women's 10m air rifle standing SH1
Physical challenge - left paralysed below the waist.
Record: First Indian woman to win two gold medals in the Games' history

DHARAMBIR, 35, Haryana
He won Gold Men's club throw 51
Physical challenge: He is paralysed from the waist down



PRAVEEN KUMAR, 21, UP
He won Gold T64 High Jump
Physical challenge: Congenital impairment

NITESH KUMAR, 29, Rajasthan
Gold in Badminton Event- Men's singles SL3
Physical challenge: Lost his leg.



SUMIT ANTIL, 26, Haryana
Gold in Men's javelin throw F64
Physical challenge: lost his left leg below the knee.

MANISH NARWAL, 22, Haryana
Silver medal in Men's 10m air pistol SH1
Physical challenge: Deformity in the right-hand

NISHAD KUMAR, 24, Himachal Pradesh
He won Silver in Men's high jump T47
Physical challenge - lost his right hand

YOGESH KATHUNIYA, 27, Delhi
Kathuniya bags Silver in Men's discus throw F56
Physical challenge: Guillain–Barré syndrome- significantly impacts mobility.

THULASIMATHI MURUGESAN, 22, Tamil Nadu
Silver in Women's singles Badminton SU5
Physical challenge: Congenital deformity in her left hand and loss of thumb.

SUHAS YATHIRAJ, 41, Uttar Pradesh
Silver in Men's singles Badminton SL4
Physical challenge - Born with a congenital deformity in his left ankle

SHARAD KUMAR, 32, Bihar
Silver in Men's high jump T63
Physical challenge: Polio, paralysis of his left leg.

AJEET SINGH YADAV, 30, Uttar Pradesh
Silver in Men's javelin throw F46
Physical challenge- amputation of his left arm below the elbow.

PRANAV SOORMA, 29, Haryana
Soorma won Silver in Men's club throw 5
Physical challenge: He had a spinal cord injury that left him paralysed.

SACHIN SARJERAO KHILARI 34, Maharashtra
Silver in Men's shot put F46
Physical challenge: gangrene and muscle atrophy in his arm.

MONA AGARWAL, 36, Rajasthan
Bronze in Women's 10m air rifle standing SH1
Physical challenge: Polio (affecting both legs)

PREETHI PAL, 23, Uttar Pradesh
Bronze in Athletics event- Women's 100m T35
Bronze in Athletic event- Women's 200m T35
Physical challenge: Cerebral palsy, coordination impairment

RUBINA FRANCIS, 25, Madhya Pradesh
Bronze in Women's 10m Air Pistol SH1
Physical challenge: Leg dysfunction

MANISHA RAMADASS, 19, Tamil Nadu
Bronze in Women's singles Badminton SU5
Physical challenge: Born with Erb's Palsy, Impairment of the upper limbs.

NITHYA SRE SIVAN, 19, Tamil Nadu
Bronze in Women's singles Badminton SH6
Physical challenge: born with a disability that affected her legs.

DEEPTHI JEEVANJI, 20, Telangana
Bronze in Women's 400m T20 Athletic
Physical challenge: Born with intellectual disability

SHEETAL DEVI, 17, Jammu and Kashmir

RAKESH KUMAR, 39, Delhi

Bronze in Mixed team compound open Archery
Physical challenge

- Kumar suffers from a spinal cord injury
- Sheetal is born with phocomelia, a rare disorder where arms are not fully formed

Sheetal Devi became India's youngest Paralympic medallist

MARIYAPPAN THANGAVELU, 29, Tamil Nadu
Bronze in Athletics Event- Men's high jump T63
Physical challenge: Permanently disabled in the right leg.

SUNDAR SINGH GURJAR, 28, Rajasthan
Bronze Men's javelin throw F46
Physical challenge: Lost his left hand.

KAPIL PARMAR, 24, Madhya Pradesh
Parmar won Bronze in Judo Men's - 60kg
Physical challenge: Vision impairment

HOKATO SEMA, 40, Nagaland
Sema won Bronze in Men's Shot Put F57
Physical challenge: Sema lost his left leg below the knee

SIMRAN SINGH, 24, Uttar Pradesh
Singh won Bronze in Women's 200m T12 Athletics
Physical challenge: Visually impaired

PHOTOS: X/PTI/ANI